Bobby Fischer

My 60 Memorable Games

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Bobby Fischer

with Introductions to the games by
Larry Evans

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(B and W refer to Black and White)

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The 60 games annotated in this volume were all played in the period 1957 to 1967 inclusive and, with the exception of nos. 44 and 50, under strict tournament conditions. The notes frequently include references to additional games, occasionally presenting them in full. An interested reader will find 34 of my earlier efforts in *Bobby Fischer's Games of Chess* (Simon and Schuster, 1959).

All of the 60 here offered contain, for me, something memorable and exciting—even the 3 losses. I have tried to be both candid and precise in my elucidations in the hope that they would offer insights into chess that will lead to fuller understanding and better play.

Finally, I wish to express my gratitude to Larry Evans, friend and colleague, for his invaluable aid in the preparation of the text as well as for his lucid introductions.

Robert J. Fischer
New York City

On the chessboard lies and hypocrisy do not survive long. The creative combination lays bare the presumption of a lie; the merciless fact, culminating in a checkmate, contradicts the hypocrite.

—*Emanuel Lasker*

Fischer – Sherwin [USA]

New Jersey Open Ch 1957

Sicilian Defence

Too little, too late

Although Sherwin makes no serious errors in the opening, he misses several equalising opportunities. Demonstrating the technical virtuosity that is to become his hallmark, Fischer, with astonishing maturity, gradually strengthens his grip by accumulating small advantages: the better centre and the two bishops. Sherwin, meanwhile, attempts to consolidate his position—only to see his 14-year-old opponent shatter it with a thunderbolt (18 ♘xh7). It brings to mind Alekhine's combinations, which also seemed to spring from nowhere. Sherwin, lashing back, refuses to fall. However, his defence finally disintegrates under a series of acute blows to his wobbly king.

1 e4 c5

2 ♘f3 e6

3 d3

This used to be my favourite. I thought it led to a favourable variation of the King's Indian reversed, particularly after Black has committed himself with ...e6.

3 ... ♘c6

4 g3 ♘f6

The later game Fischer-Ivkov, Santa Monica 1966 continued 4...d5 5 ♘bd2 ♗d6 6 ♗g2 ♘ge7 7 0-0 0-0 8 ♘h4! with chances for the initiative.

5 ♗g2 ♗e7

6 0-0 0-0

More usual is 6...d5 but Black has purposely delayed committing his centre pawns. Has he a new idea in mind?

7 ♘bd2

7 e5 ♘d5 8 ♘bd2 f6 9 exf6 ♘xf6 10 ♖e1 gives White an edge.

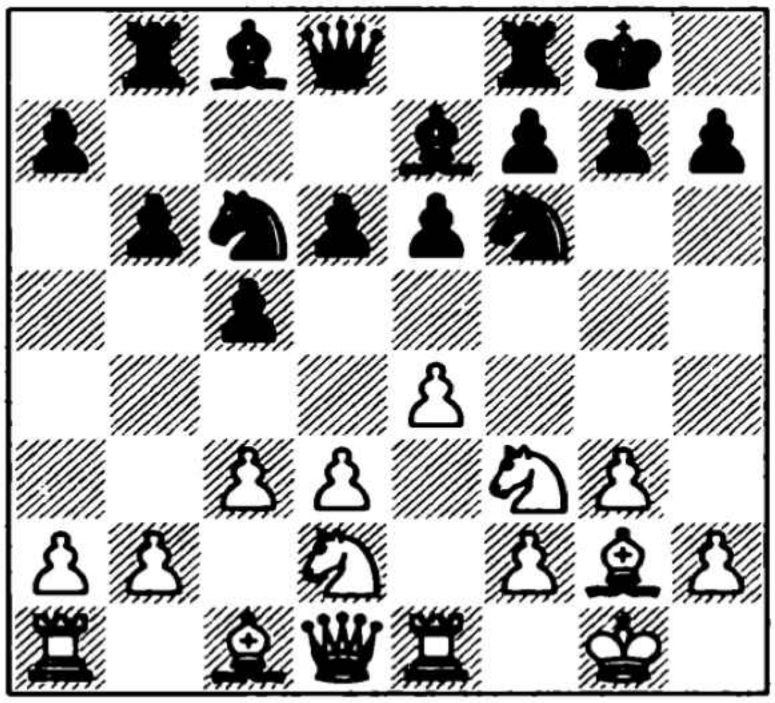
7 ... ♖b8

Sherwin slid the rook here with his pinky, as if to emphasise the cunning of this mysterious move. 7...d5 8 ♖e1 b5 9 e5 ♘d7 10 ♘f1 b4 11 h4 a5 12 ♗f4 a4 13 a3! Fischer-Miagmasuren, Sousse IZ 1967, leads to double-edged play where Black's chances on the queenside countervail White's kingside attack—but White usually comes first.

8 ♖e1 d6

9 c3 b6 *(D)*

Not bad, but I had expected 9...b5 10 d4 cxd4! (if 10...b4 11 e5! bxc3? [11...dxe5 12 dxe5 ♘d7 13 c4 holds the advantage], then 12 exf6 cxd2 13 ♘xd2! wins a piece) 11 cxd4 d5 with equality.



10 d4 ♕c7?

This move leads to trouble. Black should strive for counterplay by opening the c-file: 10...cxd4 11 cxd4 d5 12 e5 ♘d7, etc.

11 e5! ♘d5

Worse is 11...♘d7 12 exd6 ♗xd6 13 ♘e4 cxd4 14 ♘xd6 ♕xd6 15 ♗f4 e5 16 ♘xe5! ♘dxe5 17 cxd4 winning a pawn. The best try is 11...dxe5 12 dxe5 ♘d7 13 ♕e2 ♗b7 14 h4 with a bind, but Black's game may be tenable.

12 exd6 ♗xd6

13 ♘e4! c4

An unpleasant choice, since it releases the pressure in the centre and gives White a free hand to start kingside operations. However, after other moves Black simply loses material:

a) 13...♗e7 14 c4 ♘f6 15 ♗f4, etc.

b) 13...cxd4 14 ♘xd6 ♕xd6 15 c4! ♘f6 16 ♗f4 and again the line-up on this diagonal is unfortunate.

14 ♘xd6 ♕xd6

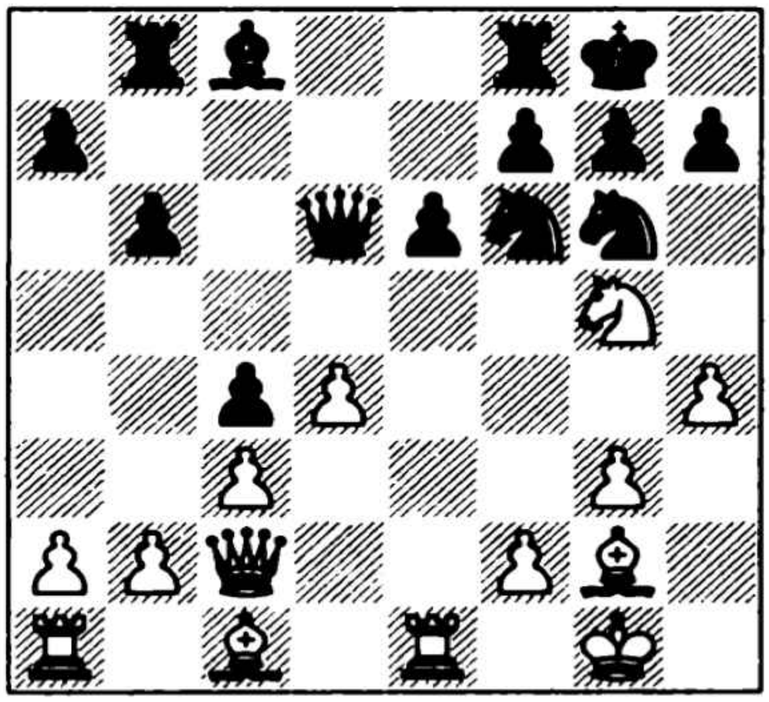
15 ♘g5! ♘ce7?

A bad mistake. Black's game is still tenable after 15...h6 16 ♘e4 ♕d8.

16 ♕c2! ♘g6

On 16...f5?, 17 ♕e2 picks off a pawn. Had Sherwin seen what was coming, however, he might have chosen 16...g6 17 ♘e4 ♕c7 18 ♗h6 ♖d8 though 19 ♕d2 prepares to exploit his weakened dark squares.

17 h4 ♘f6 *(D)*



Apparently defending everything. Unappetising is 17...♖d8 (17...h6 18 h5 hxg5 19 hxg6 f6? 20 ♕e2 intending ♕h5) 18 ♘xh7! ♔xh7 19 h5 f5 20 hxg6+ ♔xg6 21 ♖e5! with a bind.

18 ♘xh7!

Throwing a monkey wrench into Black's carefully contrived set-up!

As usual, tactics flow from a positionally superior game.

18 ... ♘xh7

Not 18...♔xh7? 19 ♗f4.

19 h5 ♘h4!

Black's best fighting chance. Not 19...♘e7, when 20 ♗f4 wins a clear exchange.

20 ♗f4 ♕d8

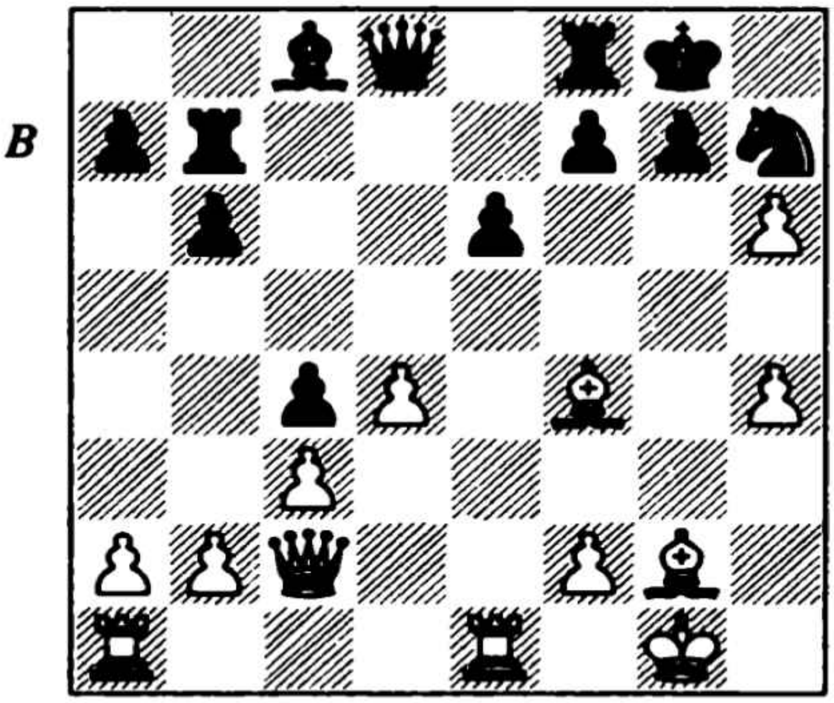
21 gxh4

21 ♗xb8? ♘xg2 22 ♔xg2 ♗b7+ 23 f3 ♕xb8.

21 ... ♖b7!

22 h6! *(D)*

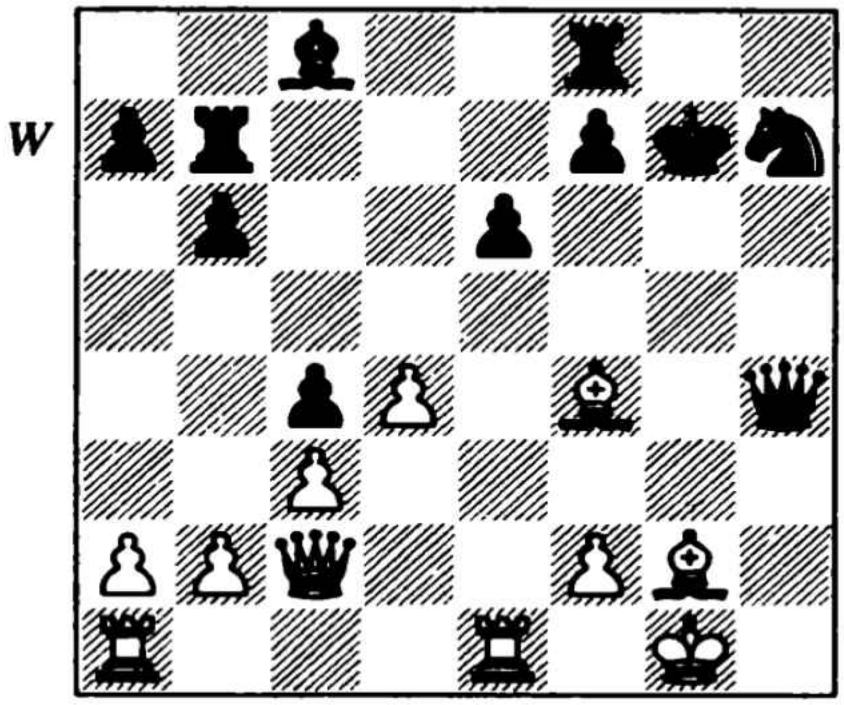
He's hoping for 22 ♗xb7 ♗xb7 and suddenly the initiative passes to Black despite his material deficit.



22 ... ♕xh4

Once again, time-pressure had Sherwin burying his thumbs in his ears. Instead of trying to mix it up, Black should keep his king sheltered as long as possible with 22...g6 23 h5! g5 (if 23...gxh5, 24 ♕e2) but 24 ♗e5 stays a pawn up with two bishops. It might still be a fight, though.

23 hxg7 ♔xg7? *(D)*



Suicidal. The last hope would have been 23...♖d8 24 ♗g3 ♕h6 though 25 ♕e2 is hard to meet (if 25...b5, then 26 a4 a6 27 axb5 axb5 28 ♖a8).

24 ♖e4!

Threatening ♗e5+.

24 ... ♕h5

25 ♖e3!

Now the rook joins in the king-hunt—and it's murder. The immediate threat is 26 ♖h3 ♕g6 27 ♖g3.

25 ... f5

26 ♖h3 ♕e8

26...♕g6? allows 27 ♖g3.

27 ♗e5+

White can pick off a couple of exchanges with 27 ♗h6+ ♔g8 28 ♗xf8 ♕xf8 29 ♗xb7, etc., but by now I felt there was more in the offing.

27 ... ♘f6

27...♔g8? 28 ♖g3+ ♔f7 29 ♖g7 mate.

28 ♕d2! ♔f7

29 ♕g5 ♕e7

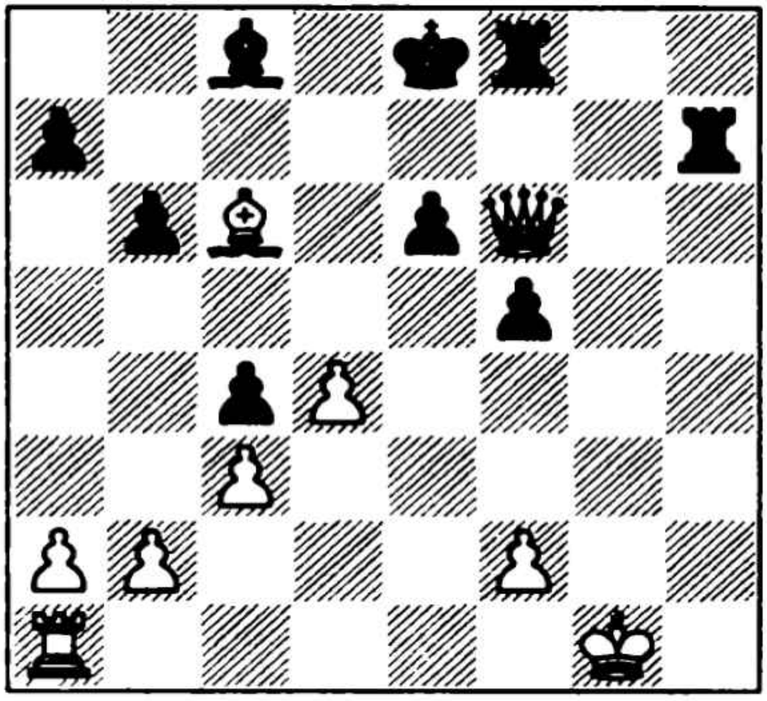
On 29...♔e7, 30 ♖h7+ is devastating.

30 ♗xf6 ♕xf6
31 ♖h7+ ♔e8
32 ♕xf6 ♖xh7

On 32...♖xf6 33 ♗xb7 nets a whole rook.

33 ♗c6+ *(D)* **1-0**

If 33...♗d7, 34 ♕xe6+.



Game 2

Fischer – Larsen [Denmark]

Portorož IZ 1958

Sicilian Defence

Slaying the Dragon

Although the Sicilian, as a whole, is still the best fighting defence at Black's disposal, much of the steam has been taken out of the time-honoured Dragon Variation. This is one of the key games that helped to batter its reputation.

In a laudable attempt to create complications, Larsen deviates from the book on move 15. That proves to be disastrous, since his counterattack never gets started. Mechanically, routinely, Fischer pries open the h-file, sacrificing first a pawn and then the exchange. There is an aura of the inevitable about the outcome. Here the notes are as instructive and lucid as the text, which is an object lesson in how to mount an assault against the fianchettoed king position.

1 e4 c5
2 ♘f3 d6
3 d4 cxd4
4 ♘xd4 ♘f6
5 ♘c3 g6

Larsen was one of the die-hards who refused to abandon the Dragon until recently. White's attack almost plays itself ... weak players even beat grandmasters with it. I once thumbed through several issues of *Shakhmatny Biulleten*, when the Yugoslav Attack was making its debut, and found the ratio was something like nine wins out of ten in White's favour. Will Black succeed in reinforcing the variation? Time will tell.

6 ♗e3 ♗g7

6...♘g4? still loses to 7 ♗b5+.

7 f3 0-0

8 ♕d2 ♘c6

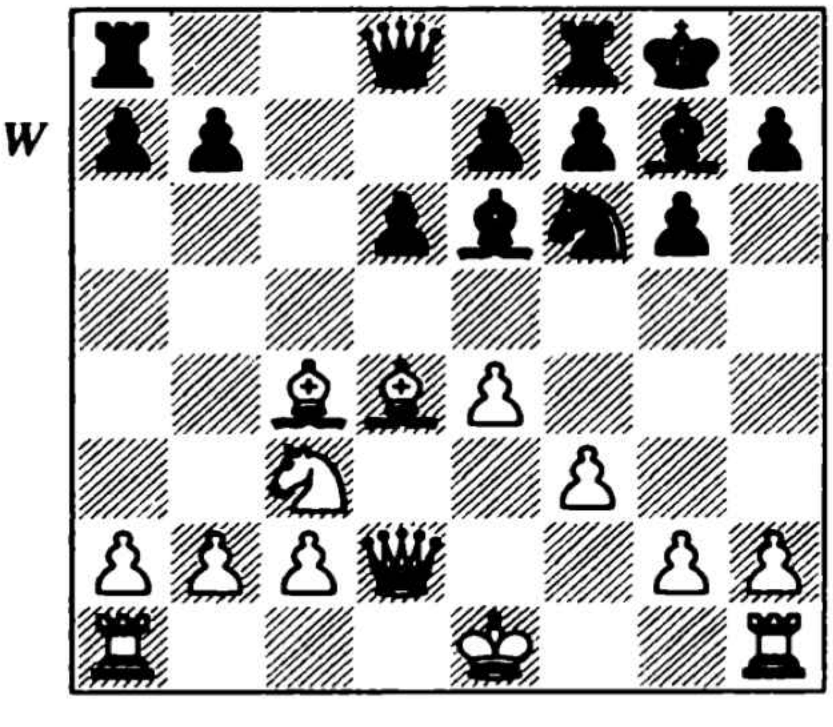
9 ♗c4

This refinement supersedes the old 9 0-0-0. The idea is to prevent ...d5.

9 ... ♘xd4

Just how Black can attempt to thread his way to equality is not clear. Interesting is Donald Byrne's 9...a5. The strongest reply is 10 g4 and if 10...♘e5 11 ♗e2 d5?, then 12 g5! wins a pawn.

10 ♗xd4 ♗e6 *(D)*



11 ♗b3 ♕a5

12 0-0-0 b5

After 12...♗xb3 13 cxb3! Black cannot make any attacking headway against this particular pawn configuration. White is lost in the king and pawn ending, it's true, but Black usually gets mated long before then. As Tarrasch put it: 'Before the endgame the gods have placed the middle game.'

13 ♔b1 b4

14 ♘d5

Weaker is 14 ♘e2 ♗xb3 15 cxb3 ♖fd8.

14 ... ♗xd5

Bad judgement is 14...♘xd5? 15 ♗xg7 ♔xg7 16 exd5 ♗d7 17 ♖de1 with a crushing bind; Suetin-Korchnoi, USSR Ch prelims 1953.

15 ♗xd5

Stronger is 15 exd5! ♕b5 16 ♖he1 a5 17 ♕e2! (Tal-Larsen, Zurich 1959) when White abandons the attack and plays for pressure along the e-file instead.

15 ... ♖ac8?

The losing move. After the game Larsen explained he was playing for a win, and therefore rejected the forced draw with 15...♘xd5 16 ♗xg7 ♘c3+ 17 bxc3 (17 ♗xc3 bxc3 18 ♕xc3 ♕xc3 19 bxc3 ♖fc8 renders White's extra pawn useless) 17...♖ab8! 18 cxb4 ♕xb4+! 19 ♕xb4 ♖xb4+ 20 ♗b2 ♖fb8, etc. After 15...♘xd5 however, I intended simply 16 exd5 ♕xd5 17 ♕xb4, keeping the game alive.

16 ♗b3!

He won't get a second chance to snap off the bishop! Now I felt the game was in the bag if I didn't botch it. I'd won dozens of skittles games in analogous positions and had it down to a science: pry open the h-file, sac, sac ... mate!

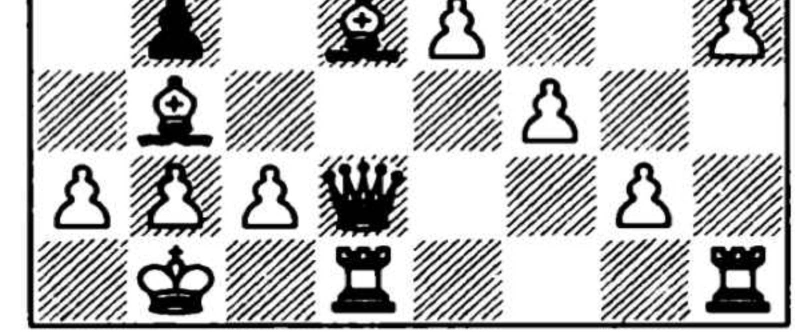
16 ... ♖c7

This loss of time is unfortunately necessary if Black is ever to advance his a-pawn. 16...♕b5? is refuted by 17 ♗xa7.

17 h4 ♕b5 *(D)*

There's no satisfactory way to impede White's attack. If 17...h5, then 18 g4! hxg4 (18...♖fc8 19 ♖dg1 hxg4 20 h5! gxh5 21 fxg4 ♘xe4 22 ♕f4 e5 23 ♕xe4 exd4 24 gxh5 ♔h8 25 h6 ♗f6 26 ♖g7! wins for White) 19 h5! gxh5 (on 19...♘xh5, 20 ♗xg7 ♔xg7 21 fxg4 ♘f6 22 ♕h6+ mates) 20 fxg4 ♘xe4 (on 20...hxg4 there follows 21 ♖dg1 e5 22 ♗e3 ♖d8 23 ♗h6, while 20...♘xg4 21 ♖dg1 ♗xd4 22 ♖xg4+! hxg4 23 ♕h6 leads to mate) 21 ♕e3 ♘f6 (21...♗xd4 22 ♕xe4 ♗g7 23 ♖xh5) 22 gxh5 e5 23 h6 wins.

Now Black is threatening to get some counterplay with ...a5-a4.



18 h5!

There's no need to lose a tempo with the old-fashioned g4.

18 ... ♖fc8

On 18...gxh5 White plays 19 g4! hxg4 20 fxg4! ♘xe4 21 ♕h2 ♘g5 22 ♗xg7 ♔xg7 23 ♖d5 ♖c5 24 ♕h6+ ♔g8 25 ♖xg5+ ♖xg5 26 ♕xh7 mate.

19 hxg6 hxg6

20 g4

Not the impatient 20 ♗xf6? ♗xf6 21 ♕h6 e6! (threatening ...♕e5) and Black holds everything.

20 ... a5

Now Black needs just one more move to get his counterattack moving. But for want of a nail the battle was lost.

21 g5 ♘h5 *(D)*

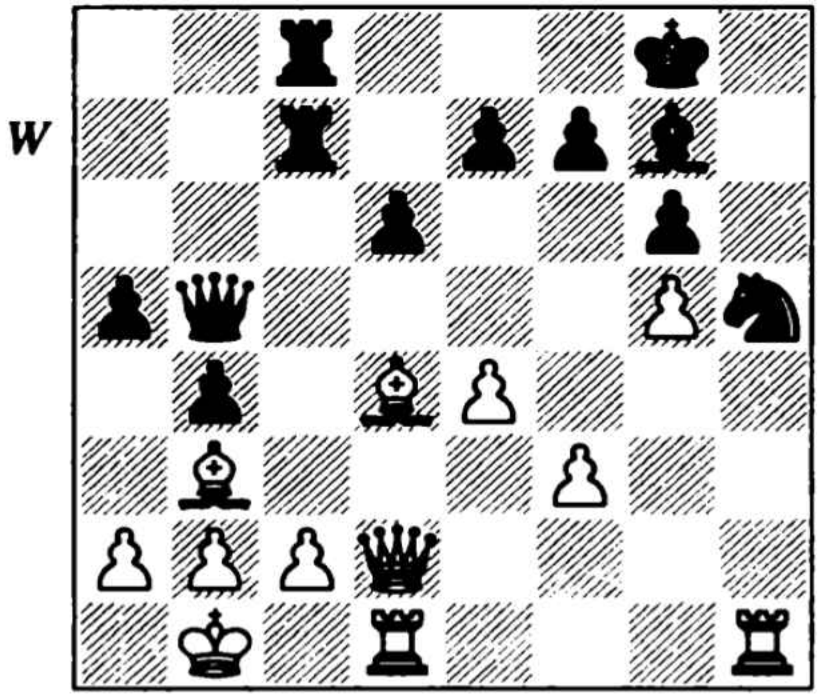
Vasiukov suggests 21...♘e8 as a possible defence (not 21...a4? when 22 gxf6 axb3 23 fxg7! bxc2+ 24 ♕xc2! e5 25 ♕h2 wins) but White crashes through with 22 ♗xg7 ♘xg7 (22...♔xg7? 23 ♕h2) 23 ♖h6! e6 (23...a4 24 ♕h2 ♘h5 25 ♖xg6+) 24 ♕h2 ♘h5 25 ♗xe6! fxe6 (if 25...♕xg5 then 26 ♖xg6+! ♕xg6 27 ♗xc8 threatening ♖g1) 26 ♖xg6+ ♘g7 27 ♖h1, etc.

22 ♖xh5!

Fine wrote: "In such positions, combinations are as natural as a baby's smile."

22 ... gxh5

No better is 22...♗xd4 23 ♕xd4 gxh5 24 g6 ♕e5 (if 24...e6, 25 ♕xd6) 25 gxf7+ ♔h7 (if 25...♔f8, 26 ♕xe5



dxe5 27 ♜g1 e6 28 ♗xe6 ♔e7 29 ♗xc8 ♜xc8 30 ♜g5 wins) 26 ♛d3! (intending f4) should be decisive.

23 g6 e5

Or 23...e6 24 gxf7+ ♔xf7 (if 24...♜xf7, 25 ♗xe6) 25 ♗xg7 ♔xg7 26 ♜g1+ ♔h7 27 ♛g2 ♛e5 28 ♛g6+ ♔h8 29 ♜g5 ♜g7 30 ♜xh5+ ♔g8 31 ♗xe6+ ♔f8 32 ♜f5+ ♔e7 33 ♜f7+ winning.

24 gxf7+ ♔f8

25 ♗e3 d5!

A desperate bid for freedom. On 25...a4 (or 25...♜d8 26 ♗h6) 26 ♛xd6+ ♜e7, White mates with 27 ♛d8+! ♜xd8 28 ♜xd8+ ♜e8 29 ♗c5+.

26 exd5!

Not 26 ♗xd5 ♜xc2!.

26 ... ♜xf7

On 26...a4, 27 d6! axb3 28 dxc7 wins.

27 d6 ♜f6

After 27...♜d7 White can either regain the exchange with 28 ♗e6 or try for more with 28 ♗h6. 27...♜xf3 is met by 28 d7 threatening ♛d6 mate.

28 ♗g5 ♛b7

Or 28...♛d7 29 ♛d5! ♛f7 (if 29...♜f7, 30 ♗e7+!) 30 ♗xf6 winning material.

29 ♗xf6 ♗xf6

30 d7 ♜d8

31 ♛d6+ 1-0

A mistake! 31 ♛h6+! forces mate in three.

Game 3

Petrosian [USSR] – **Fischer**

Portorož IZ 1958

King's Indian Defence

Bear hug

In what appear to be perfectly equal positions, Petrosian consistently finds seemingly innocuous moves that gradually overwhelm his opponent. He accomplishes his objective simply by exchanging pieces and manoeuvring for victory without taking unnecessary risks. This essentially defensive technique

has the virtue, when it doesn't utterly succeed, of producing a draw. Fischer, by contrast, generally chooses the sharpest course, however precipitous it may become. Occasionally he overreaches himself, but it makes for interesting chess.

In this game, replete with errors on both sides, Petrosian succeeds in pinning his opponent for a time to a static endgame. But Fischer manages to burst his bonds, only to blunder on the very next move (51...♔d6). Petrosian, however, by blundering in his turn, restores the balance. The ensuing rook and pawn ending produces a thrilling draw.

1 c4 ♘f6
2 ♘c3 g6
3 g3 ♗g7
4 ♗g2 0-0
5 ♘f3 d6
6 0-0 ♘c6
7 d3

On 7 d4 I intended 7...e5. Petrosian is striving for an English Opening formation, a slow system for which he is temperamentally suited.

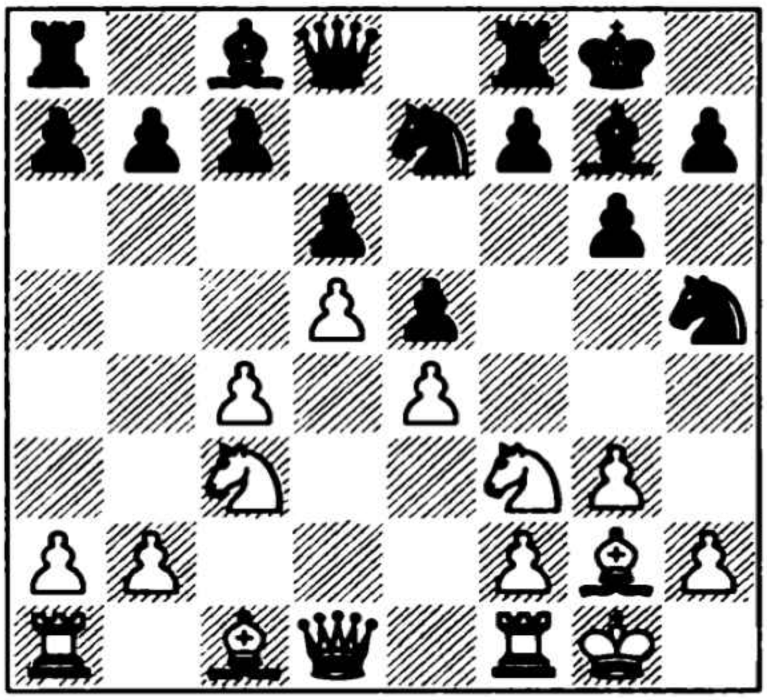
7 ... ♘h5
8 d4

Reckoning he can afford this loss of time in view of Black's misplaced king's knight. After 8 ♖b1 f5! 9 ♕c2 a5 10 a3 f4 (Petrosian-Vasiukov, Moscow 1956) Black obtains a good aggressive set-up. I was as impressed by that game as Petrosian must have been, since he got crushed.

8 ... e5
9 d5

Or 9 dxe5 dxe5 10 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 11 ♘d5 ♖d7 12 ♗h3 f5 13 g4 ♘f6!. If 14 gxf5 (Black wins after 14 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 15 gxf5 gxf5 16 ♗xf5?? ♖g7+), then 14...♘xd5 15 cxd5 ♖xd5.

9 ... ♘e7
10 e4 *(D)*



This is the right time for Black to get in 10...c5!. Petrosian-Boleslavsky, USSR Ch prelims 1957, continued 11 ♘e1 ♔h8 12 ♘d3 f5 13 ♖b1 ♘f6 =.

10 ... f5
11 exf5 gxf5

11...♘xf5 is tempting but unsound, e.g. 12 g4 ♘d4 13 gxh5 ♗g4 14 ♘xd4! ♗xd1 15 ♘e6, etc. And on 11...♗xf5 12 ♘g5 ♕d7 13 ♘e6! ♗xe6 14 dxe6 ♕xe6 15 ♗xb7 ♖ab8 16 ♗g2 ♕xc4 17 ♘d5!, White comes out on top.

12 ♘xe5! ♘xg3

A 'desperado' combination: this knight (which is doomed anyway) sells its life as dearly as possible.

13 hxg3

Simple and good. I had expected 13 fxg3 but Petrosian eschews the kingside attack and plays for control of the centre squares instead. His judgement turns out to be right.

13 ... ♗xe5?

13...dxe5, keeping a fluid pawn centre, offers more play. I was unduly worried about White's passed d-pawn after 14 c5.

14 f4! ♗g7
15 ♗e3 ♗d7
16 ♗d4

Forcing the trade of Black's most active piece. White soon obtains a firm grip on the position.

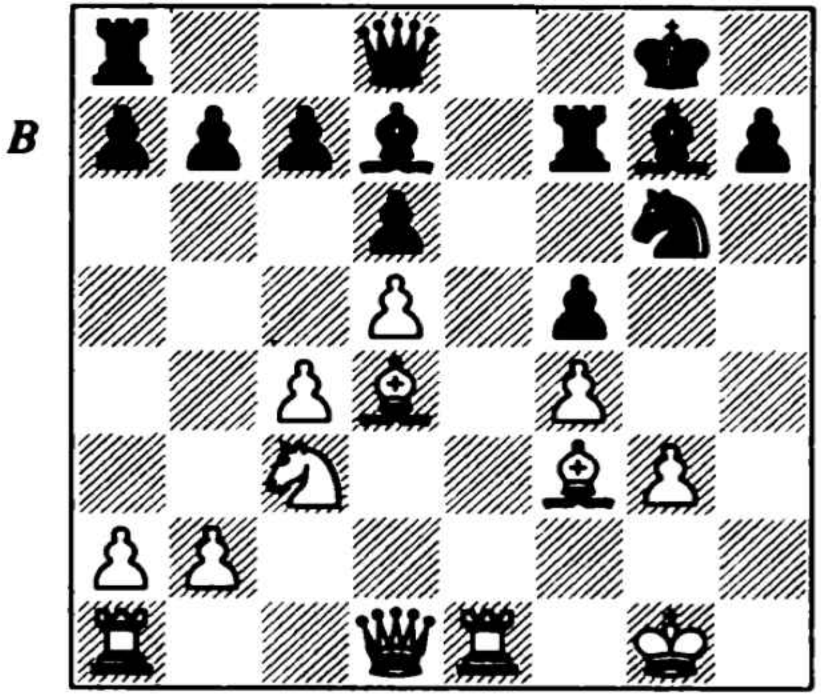
16 ... ♘g6
17 ♖e1?

A careless transposition. Now by 17...♗xd4+ 18 ♕xd4 h5, followed by ...h4, Black could exchange his isolated h-pawn for White's g-pawn and the game would be dead equal. 17 ♗f3 was correct.

17 ... ♖f7?
18 ♗f3! *(D)*

Black doesn't get a second chance.

18 ... ♕f8
19 ♔f2 ♖e8
20 ♖xe8 ♕xe8
21 ♗xg7 ♖xg7
22 ♕d4 b6



23 ♖h1

White has effortlessly achieved a plus and now he wants to improve his position before embarking on a committal course. 23 b4! threatening c5 is much sharper, and poses more immediate problems.

23 ... a5

My first free breath!

24 ♘d1 ♕f8
25 ♘e3

Petrosian keeps building without getting side-tracked—even by good moves. I was more afraid of 25 ♗h5! tying me up completely. Then the rook can't move because of ♗xg6 followed by a check on h8.

25 ... ♖f7!
26 b3 ♕g7

The exchange of queens eases the cramp. White can't afford to retreat and cede this important diagonal.

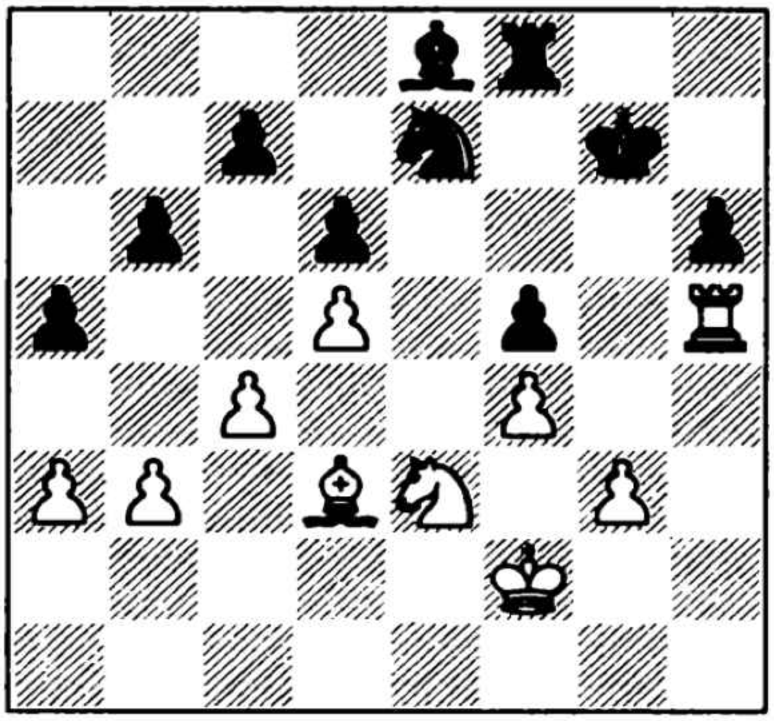
27 ♕xg7+ ♔xg7
28 a3 ♖f8
29 ♗e2

White constantly finds ways to improve his position. Not 29 b4 axb4

30 axb4 ♖a8 and Black seizes the open file.

29 ... ♘e7
30 ♗d3 h6
31 ♖h5 ♗e8 *(D)*

W



32 ♖h2

Avoiding a little trap: 32 ♘xf5+? (or 32 ♖xf5? ♖h8!) 32...♘xf5 33 ♖xf5 ♖h8! followed by ...♗g6 winning the exchange.

32 ... ♗d7
33 ♖h1 ♖h8
34 ♘c2!

Heading for an even stronger post on d4. I was amazed during the game. Each time Petrosian achieved a good position, he managed to manoeuvre into a better one.

34 ... ♔f6
35 ♘d4 ♔g7
36 ♗e2

Feigning an invasion with ♗h5 and ♖e1 and ♘e6+. White has two wings to operate on; Black must be flexed to react appropriately, and this

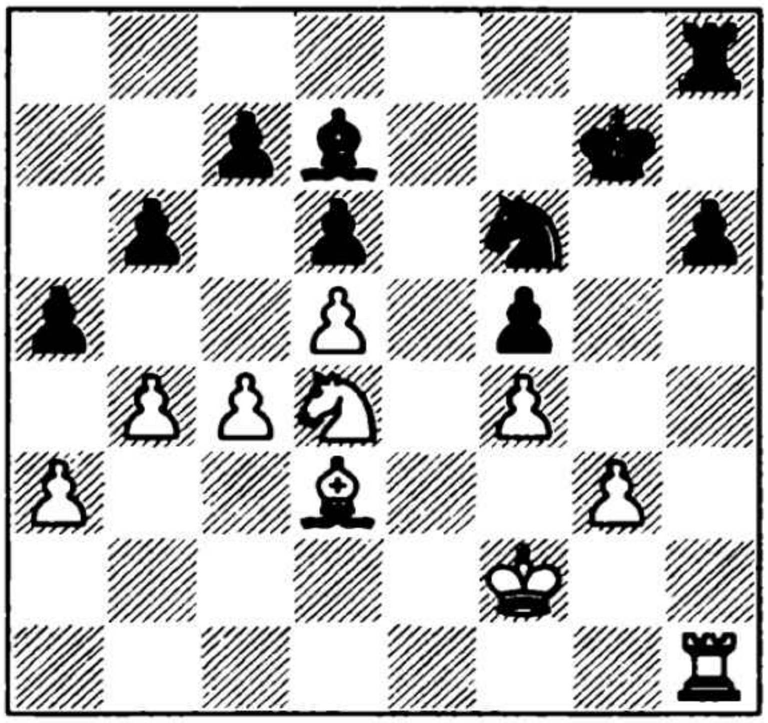
36 ... ♘g8?

Panicking and giving him the opportunity he's been waiting for to sneak b4 in at a moment when Black can't counter with ...axb4 and ...♖a8. Petrosian likes to play cat-and-mouse, hoping that his opponents will go wrong in the absence of a direct threat. The amazing thing is—they usually do! Witness a case in point. I should just have ignored his 'threat' with, say, 36...♖a8 37 ♗h5 ♖c8 38 ♖e1 ♔f6 and if 39 ♘e6, then 39...c6.

37 b4! ♘f6
38 ♗d3! *(D)*

38 bxa5 ♘e4+ 39 ♔g2 bxa5 40 ♖b1 ♘c5 holds.

B



38 ... axb4

38...♘e4+? 39 ♗xe4 fxe4 40 bxa5 bxa5 (if 40...♖a8, then 41 axb6 cxb6 42 ♖b1) 41 ♖b1 followed by ♖b7 wins easily. White also invades after 38...♔g6 39 bxa5 bxa5 40 ♖b1.

39 axb4 ♔g6

White has finally achieved his ideal set-up, but Black's game is still tenable.

40 ... ♘g4+

41 ♔e2 ♖e8+

42 ♔d2 ♘f6

43 ♖a6

43 ♖a7 ♖c8 transposes to the game.

43 ... ♖b8

44 ♖a7 ♖c8

45 c5!

This pawn sac caught me completely by surprise. It's the only line that gives Black any trouble.

45 ... bxc5

Not 45...♘xd5? 46 c6.

46 bxc5 dxc5

47 ♘f3! ♔f7!

47...♘xd5 loses to 48 ♘e5+.

48 ♘e5+ ♔e7

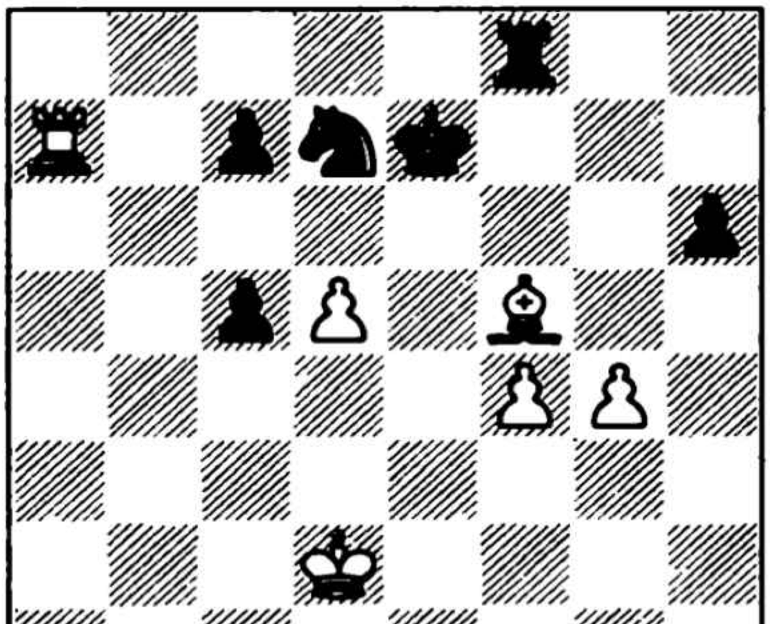
49 ♘xd7 ♘xd7

50 ♗xf5 ♖f8!

51 g4 *(D)*

51 ♗xd7 ♔xd7 52 ♔e3 (if 52 ♖a6 ♖g8) 52...♔d6 53 ♖a6+ ♔xd5 54 ♖xh6 ♖e8+ 55 ♔f3 c4 should draw.

B



51 ... ♔d6?

Should be the losing move! Correct is 51...♘f6! 52 ♗e6 ♘xd5! 53 ♗xd5 ♖xf4 (53...♖d8 also draws) winning the last pawn and forcing a draw.

52 ♗xd7! ♔xd7

53 ♔e3 ♖e8+

On 53...c4, 54 ♖a6 wins. The idea is to force his king to the kingside, away from the passed c-pawn.

54 ♔f3

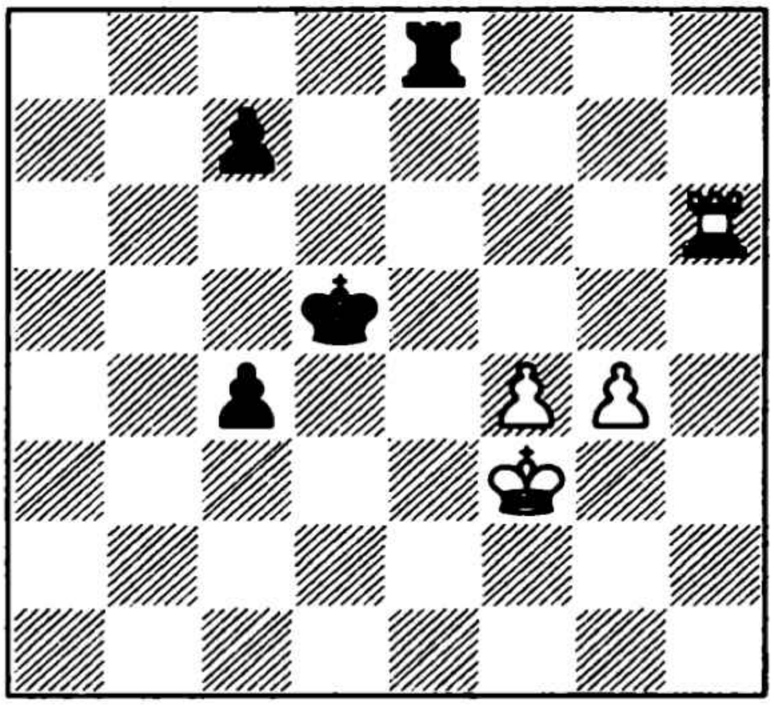
Not 54 ♔d3 ♖g8.

54 ... ♔d6

55 ♖a6+ ♔xd5

56 ♖xh6 c4 *(D)*

W



57 ♖h1?

As Petrosian points out in the Russian bulletins of the tournament, White can win with the following line: "57 ♖h7! c6 58 ♖d7+ ♔c5 59 ♖d1 c3 60 g5 ♔c4 61 g6 c2 62 ♖c1 ♔c3 63 f5 ♖g8 64 ♔f4 ♔d2 65 ♖xc2+ ♔xc2 66 ♔g5 c5 67 f6 c4 68 f7 ♖xg6+ 69 ♔xg6 c3 70 f8♕." White is a tempo ahead of the game, where Black's pawn succeeds in reaching c2, instead of c3 (as here).

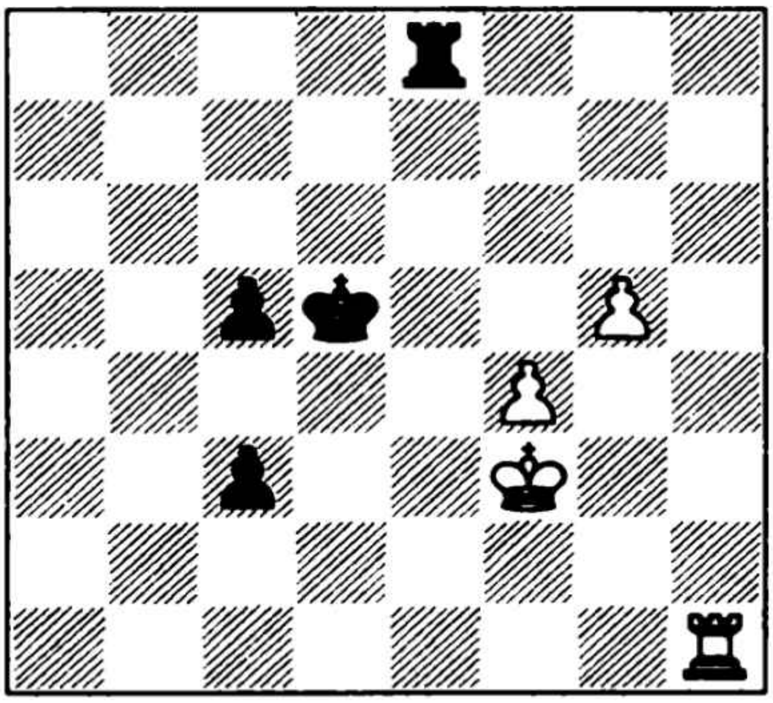
What if Black tries to improve? For example, after 57 ♖h7, he may try 57...c5 58 ♖d7+ ♔e6 59 ♖d1 ♖b8. Now there are two main lines for White:

a) 60 g5? c3 61 ♔g4 (if 61 ♖c1 ♔f5 62 ♖xc3 c4! 63 ♖xc4 ♖b3+ with a draw by blockade although Black is two pawns down) 61...♖b4! 62 ♖e1+ ♔f7 63 ♔f5 c2 64 ♖c1 ♖c4 65 g6+ ♔g7 66 ♔g5 ♖c3 draws.

b) 60 f5+! ♔e5 61 ♖e1+ ♔d4 (after 61...♔f6, 62 ♔f4 c3 63 g5+ ♔g7 64 g6 c2 65 ♔g5 ♖b1 66 f6+ wins) 62 g5 c3 63 f6 c2 64 ♖c1! (64 f7? ♖b1! draws) 64...♔e5 65 ♔g4! snuffs out Black's resistance.

57 ... c3
58 g5 c5 *(D)*

W



59 ♖d1+

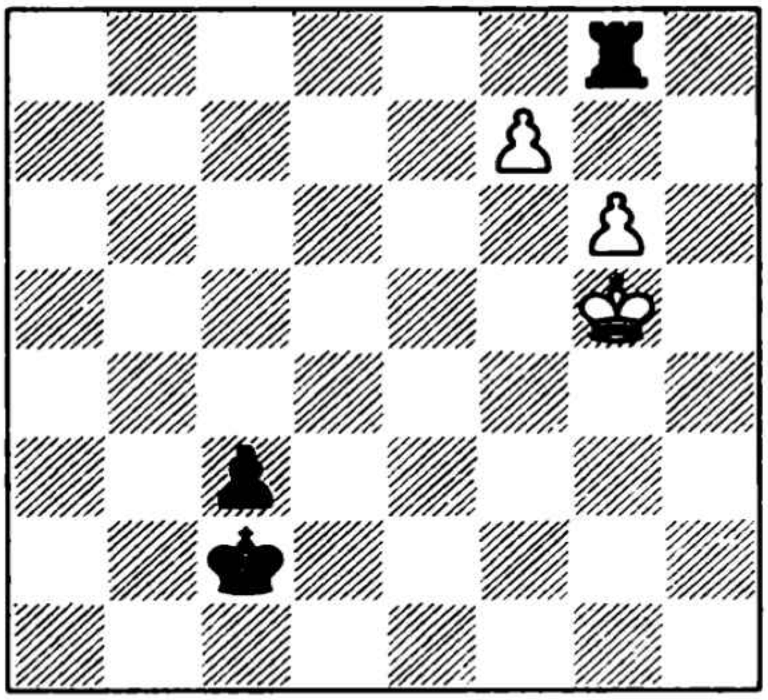
It's tough right down the line. After 59 g6 ♖g8 60 f5 ♔e5! 61 ♔g4 ♔f6 62 ♖c1 c4! 63 ♖xc3 ♖c8! White can make no headway. 59 ♔g4 is met by 59...♖e2! 60 g6 ♔e4! 61 ♔g5 ♖g2+ 62 ♔f6 ♔xf4, etc., as the Russian bulletins also point out.

59 ... ♔c4
60 g6 c2
61 ♖c1

After 61 ♖g1 ♖d8! the threat of ...♖d1 forces 62 ♖c1 (not 62 g7? ♖g8! followed by ...♖xg7 and Black wins).

61 ... ♔d3
62 f5 ♖g8!
63 ♔f4 ♔d2
64 ♖xc2+ ♔xc2
65 ♔g5 c4
66 f6 c3
67 f7 *(D)* **½-½**

B



I offered the draw, not realising it was bad etiquette. It was Petrosian's place to extend the offer after 67...♖xg6+ (if Black wants to get melodramatic, 67...♖c8 68 g7 ♔b1 69 f8♕ ♖xf8 61 gxf8♕ c2 reaches the same position) 68 ♔xg6 ♔b1 69 f8♕ c2 and Black has reached a book draw.

Pilnik [Argentina] – **Fischer**

Mar del Plata 1959

Sicilian Defence

Tact and tactics

The presence in Argentina of Pilnik, Najdorf, and Eliskases, who chose to remain there after participating in the Buenos Aires Chess Olympiad of 1939, created a chess renaissance, as attested by the annual event at Mar del Plata which, though not lavish with prizes, offers an exotic vacation and attracts the world's best. Fischer tied for 3-4 with Ivkov, a mere half point behind Pachman and Najdorf in a strong field of fifteen.

After a lacklustre opening by both sides, and a middle game that, with the exception of 26...bxa3, can scarcely be described as more than routine, Fischer pilots the game into an even ending. Both he and Pilnik then proceed to complicate; but the latter is drawn into making a false lead, which Fischer exploits by obtaining a passed centre pawn. From this point on, although Pilnik does all that can be done to stave off the inevitable, Fischer is not gulled into making a single wrong step.

1 e4 c5
2 ♘f3 d6
3 d4 cxd4
4 ♘xd4 ♘f6
5 ♘c3 a6
6 ♗e2

For 6 h3 see Games 35, 40, 43. For 6 ♗c4 see Games 17, 55, 58.

6 ... e5
7 ♘b3 ♗e7

For 7...♗e6 see Game 42.

8 0-0

Another try is 8 ♗g5 0-0! (not 8...♘bd7?, when 9 a4! gives White a powerful bind) 9 ♘d2 ♘xe4! 10 ♗xe7 ♘xc3 11 ♗xd8 ♘xd1 12 ♗e7 ♖e8 13 ♘c4 ♘xb2! 14 ♘b6 ♖xe7 15 ♘xa8 ♘a4 16 0-0-0 (Fischer-Ghitescu, Leipzig OL 1960) 16...♖d7! and the liquidation has given Black the better game.

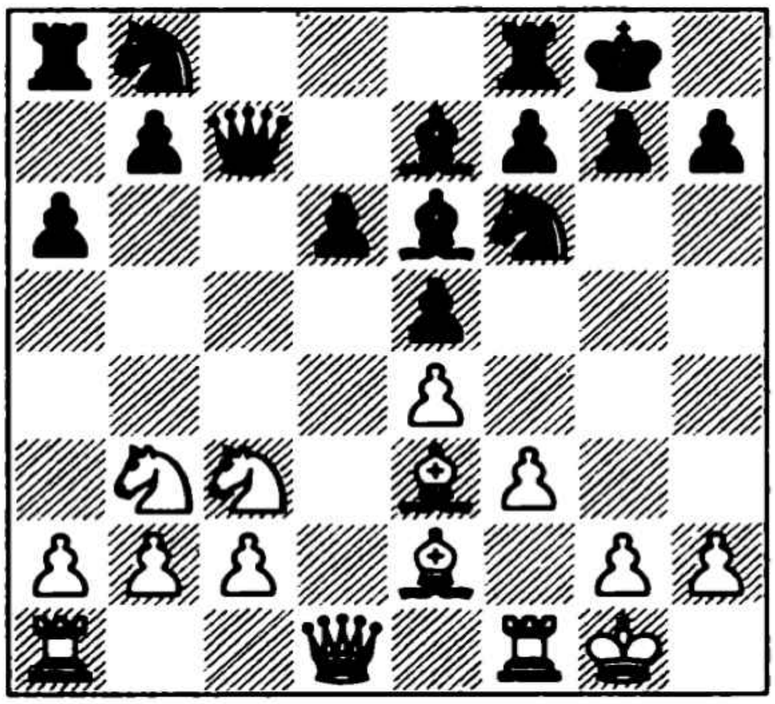
8 ... 0-0
9 ♗e3 ♗e6
10 f3

A sharper alternative is 10 a4 ♕c7 11 a5 ♘bd7 12 ♘d5 ♘xd5 13 exd5 ♗f5 14 c4 ♗g6 15 ♔h1 ♖ac8 16 ♕d2 ♕d8 17 ♖ac1 h6 18 f4 exf4 19

♗xf4 ♗g5 Smyslov-Gligoric, Havana 1962.

10 ... ♕c7 *(D)*

Premature is 10...d5 11 exd5 ♘xd5 12 ♘xd5 ♕xd5 13 ♕xd5 ♗xd5 14 ♖fd1 with a slight edge in the ending for White.



11 ♕e1

Once popular, this whole system is now known to give White nothing. It hinders neither Black's development nor his queenside expansion.

11 ... ♘bd7

12 ♖d1

On 12 a4, 12...d5 is strong.

12 ... b5

13 ♖d2

13 a3 is met by 13...♘b6 14 ♗xb6! ♕xb6+ with equality.

13 ... ♘b6

More direct is 13...b4 14 ♘d5 ♘xd5 15 exd5 ♗f5 16 ♕f2 a5 with good play against White's backward c-pawn.

14 ♕f2?

Careless. 14 ♗xb6 is necessary.

14 ... ♖ab8?

I figured if he didn't take it off last move he wouldn't take it now; so I wanted to build a little more and keep the option of moving the knight to a4 as well as c4. But Black should pounce on the chance to play 14...♘c4! 15 ♗xc4 bxc4 16 ♗b6 (16 ♘a1 ♖ab8 17 ♖b1 ♖b7 is strong for Black; if 16 ♘c1 ♖ab8 17 ♘a4 c3! 18 bxc3?, then 18...♕c6 19 ♘b6 ♗d8) 16...♕c8 17 ♘a5 ♘d7! and White's in trouble, e.g. 18 ♘d5 (or 18 ♗e3 ♗d8 19 ♘d5 ♗xd5 20 ♖xd5 ♘f6 winning at least the exchange) 18...♗xd5 19 ♖xd5 (19 exd5 ♘xb6 20 ♕xb6 ♗d8 21 ♕b4 ♖b8 22 ♕a3 ♗xa5 23 ♕xa5 ♖xb2) 19...♖b8 winning at least a pawn.

15 ♗xb6!

Pilnik hastens to make amends for his omission. Not 15 ♘a5?, when 15...d5! wins material (Ståhlberg).

15 ... ♖xb6

16 ♘d5 ♘xd5

17 exd5 ♗d7

18 f4 ♗f6

I didn't want to weaken my e6 square with 18...f5 19 c3 ♗f6 20 fxe5 dxe5 (if 20...♗xe5 21 ♘d4) 21 ♘c5 =.

19 c3 ♖bb8

20 fxe5 ♗xe5

On 20...dxe5, 21 d6 gives White active play. Black's advantage of the bishop pair is neutralised by the weakness of c6, which White can later occupy with his knight.

21 ♘d4 g6

22 a3

More to the point was 22 ♗f3 b4 23 cxb4 ♖xb4 24 ♘c6 with an equal position.

22 ... a5

23 ♔h1

23 ♗f3 should again be played. White starts drifting.

23 ... b4

24 cxb4

After 24 axb4 axb4 25 c4 b3! Black keeps the initiative.

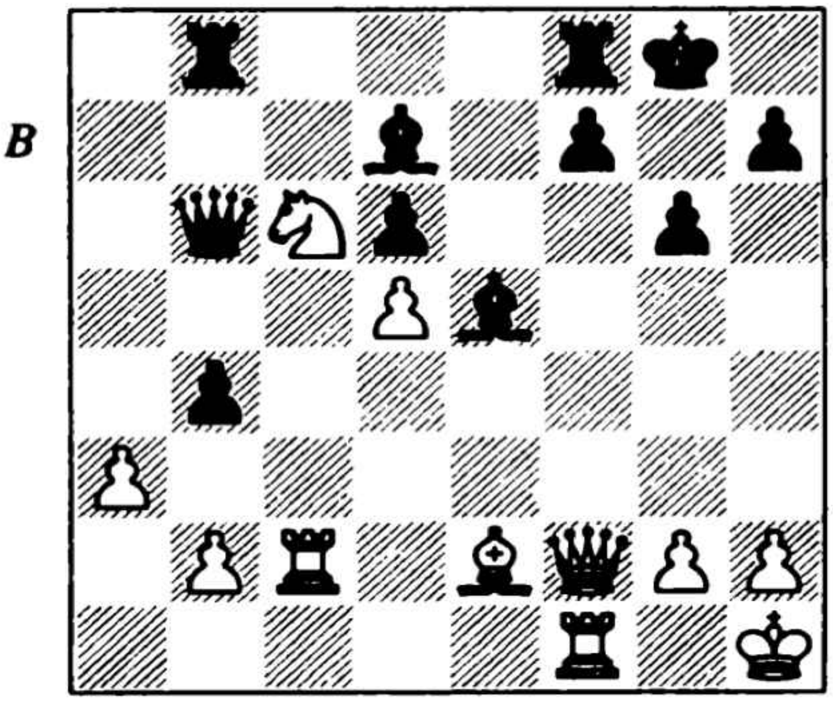
24 ... axb4

25 ♖c2

25 ♗f3 bxa3 26 bxa3 ♖a8 presents its problems to White.

25 ... ♕b6

26 ♘c6 *(D)*



This is the position White was playing for. A draw now looks secure.

26 ... bxa3!

27 ♕xb6

27 bxa3 is also adequate, but not 27 ♘xb8? ♕xf2 28 ♖xf2 a2 29 ♖f1 (29 ♖c1 ♗xb2) 29...♗f5 30 ♖cc1 ♖xb8 winning.

27 ... ♖xb6

28 bxa3 ♖a8

29 ♘xe5?

This gives Black a strong passed e-pawn. Correct is 29 ♖a2 ♖b2 30 ♖xb2 ♗xb2 31 ♗b5! ♖xa3 (otherwise a4) 32 ♘e7+ ♔f8 33 ♘xg6+ with a draw in view. On 33...hxg6, 34 ♗xd7 produces opposite-coloured bishops. Or on 33...♔e8, 34 ♖e1+! (after 34 ♗xd7+ ♔xd7 35 ♖xf7+? ♔d8 Black wins a piece) 34...♔d8 35 ♗xd7 fxg6 with equality (35...♔xd7 is met by 36 ♘f8+ followed by 37 ♘xh7).

29 ... dxe5

30 ♖c3

30 ♖c7 leads to nothing after 30...♖d6 and the sacrifice 31 ♗b5?! is refuted by 31...♗xb5 32 ♖fxf7 ♖c8!. Or 30 ♖a2 (30 ♖a1? ♖xa3) 30...♖a5 31 ♗c4 (or 31 ♖d1 ♗a4) 31...♖c5 and the d-pawn falls.

30 ... ♖b2!

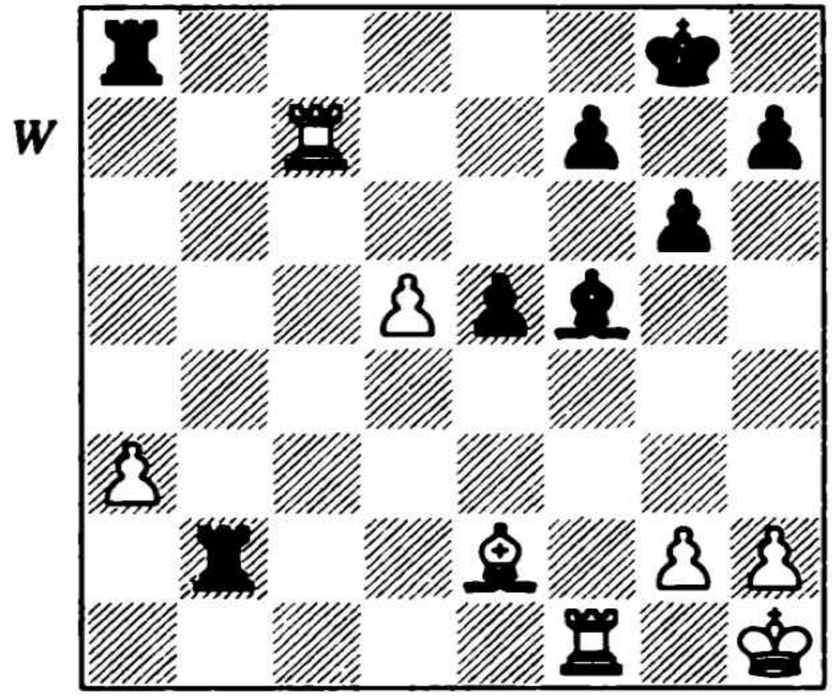
31 ♖c7

Desperately striving for counterplay. On 31 ♗c4 (to prevent ...♖a2), 31...♔g7 32 d6 f5 33 ♗d5 ♖a6 again wins the d-pawn. Alternatively, 31 ♗f3 f5 32 ♖c7 ♗b5 33 ♖e1 e4 squelches White's play.

31 ... ♗f5 *(D)*

32 g4

A wild hope. 32 ♗c4 ♖c2! 33 d6 ♖xc4! 34 ♖xc4 ♗d3 35 ♖fc1 ♗xc4 36 ♖xc4 ♖xa3 37 ♔g1 ♔g7! is



hopeless; Black soon picks off the d-pawn and wins easily.

32 ... ♗e4+
33 ♗f3 ♗d3
34 d6

Or 34 ♖e1 e4! 35 ♗g2 (35 ♗xe4 ♖e8 wins for Black) 35...♖d8 36 ♖c5 ♔g7! 37 ♔g1 (if 37 g5 h6 38 h4 hxg5 39 hxg5, then 39...♖h8+ 40 ♔g1 ♖h4! wins) 37...f5 38 gxf5 gxf5 and the two connected passed pawns should win (39 d6 is met by 39...♔f6!).

34 ... ♖d8
35 ♖e1 ♖xd6

Najdorf chided me after the game for 'missing' 35...e4 36 ♗xe4! ♖b1! 39 ♖xb1 ♗xe4+ 40 ♔g1 ♗xb1 and wins.

36 ♖xe5

Falling into the trap. 36 ♖e7 holds out longer, but 36...♖f6 37 ♗d5 e4 38 ♗xe4 ♗xe4+ 39 ♖7xe4 ♖6f2 wins.

36 ... ♖f6!
37 ♖e3

Forced. 39 ♗g2 loses to 39...♖b1.

37 ... ♖xf3!
38 ♖xf3 ♗e4
39 ♖xf7 ♖f2
40 ♖f8+ ♔g7
0-1

After 41 ♖f7+, Black wins with 41...♔h6. Alternatively, 41 ♖f4 ♗d5 (41...♗xf3+ 42 ♔g1 ♖g2+ 43 ♔f1 ♗c6 44 ♖c4 ♗b5! also wins) cooks White's goose.

Game 5

Fischer – Rossetto [Argentina]

Mar del Plata 1959

Sicilian Defence

The Unpleasant Obligation

This game exemplifies most dramatically the German expression *zugzwang*.

Unable to achieve any workable advantage from the opening or middlegame, Fischer embarks on an equally unpromising ending. He manages, however, after 19 ♘d5, to acquire a bishop against a knight. Subsequently he employs an unusual rook manoeuvre along the third rank (23 ♖a3) in order to make spatial inroads. Rossetto unwittingly co-operates and soon is faced by a rare predicament: although material is equal, any move he makes must disturb the precarious balance and hasten his own disaster. That is zugzwang—and, appropriately, Rossetto resigns.

1 e4 c5
2 ♘f3 e6
3 d4 cxd4
4 ♘xd4 a6
5 c4 ♕c7

Stronger is 5...♘f6 6 ♘c3 ♗b4, which theory gives as equal for Black.

6 ♘c3 ♘f6
7 ♗d3?

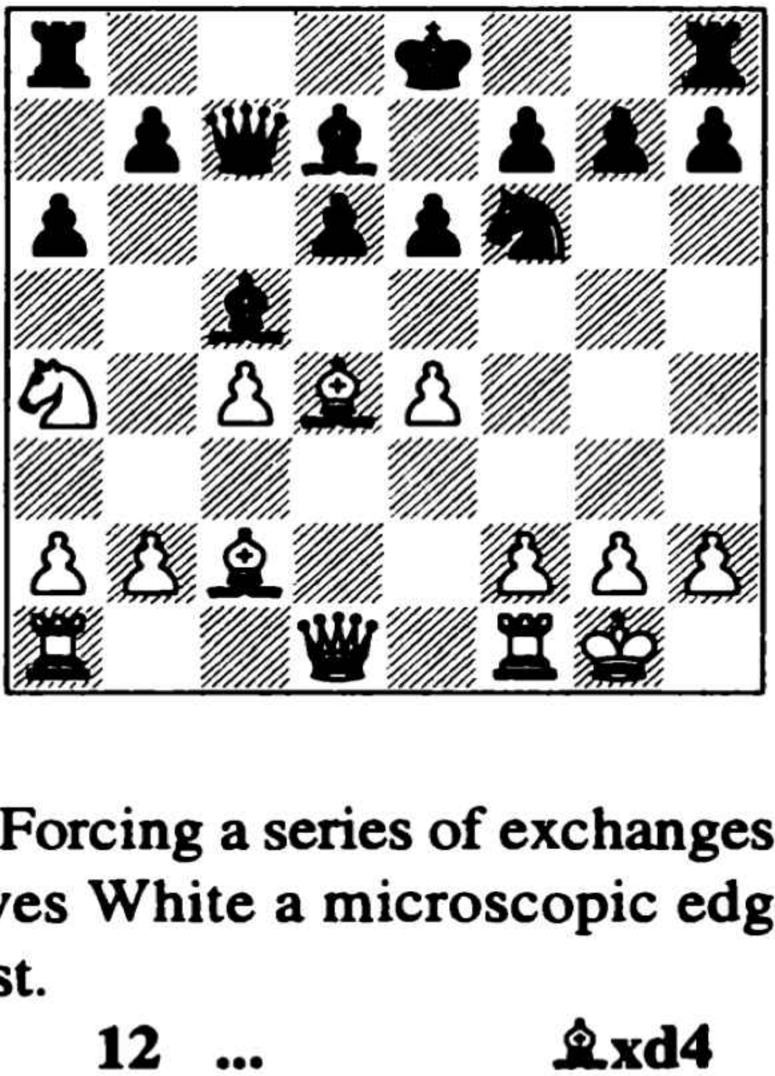
Misplacing the bishop. 7 a3! is right, and if 7...♘c6, then 8 ♗e3, etc. (8...♘e5 9 ♗e2! ♘xc4? loses to 10 ♗xc4 ♕xc4 11 ♖c1).

7 a3!, by preventing ...♗b4 once and for all, forces Black to adopt a kind of Scheveningen formation that keeps him desperately cramped. A Spielmann-Tartakower game proceeded: 7...♗e7 8 ♗e2 0-0 9 0-0 d6 10 ♗e3 ♘bd7 11 ♖c1 b6 12 b4! ♗b7 13 f3 ♖ac8 14 ♕e1 ♕b8 15 ♕f2 'with a beautiful position for White.' (From *More Chess Questions Answered.*)

7 ... ♘c6
8 ♗e3 ♘xd4?

Instead of trying to simplify, Black should select the aggressive 8...♘e5! 9 ♖c1 (not 9 0-0 ♘eg4! or 9 ♗e2 ♘xc4 10 ♗xc4 ♕xc4 11 ♖c1 ♕b4 12 0-0 d6 and now 13 ♘b3? is met by 13...♘xe4! 14 a3 ♘xc3, etc.) 9...♘fg4! with advantage.

9 ♗xd4 ♗c5
10 ♗c2 d6
11 0-0 ♗d7
12 ♘a4 *(D)*



Forcing a series of exchanges that gives White a microscopic edge, at best.

12 ... ♗xd4
13 ♕xd4 ♖d8
14 ♖fd1 0-0
15 ♖ac1

15 ♕xd6 ♕xd6 16 ♖xd6 ♗xa4 17 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 18 ♗xa4 ♘xe4 =.

15 ... ♕a5

15...b5? 16 cxb5 axb5 17 ♘c3 (not 17 e5? dxe5 18 ♗xh7+ ♘xh7) and Black's b-pawn is weak. 15...♗c6 is solid but cramped.

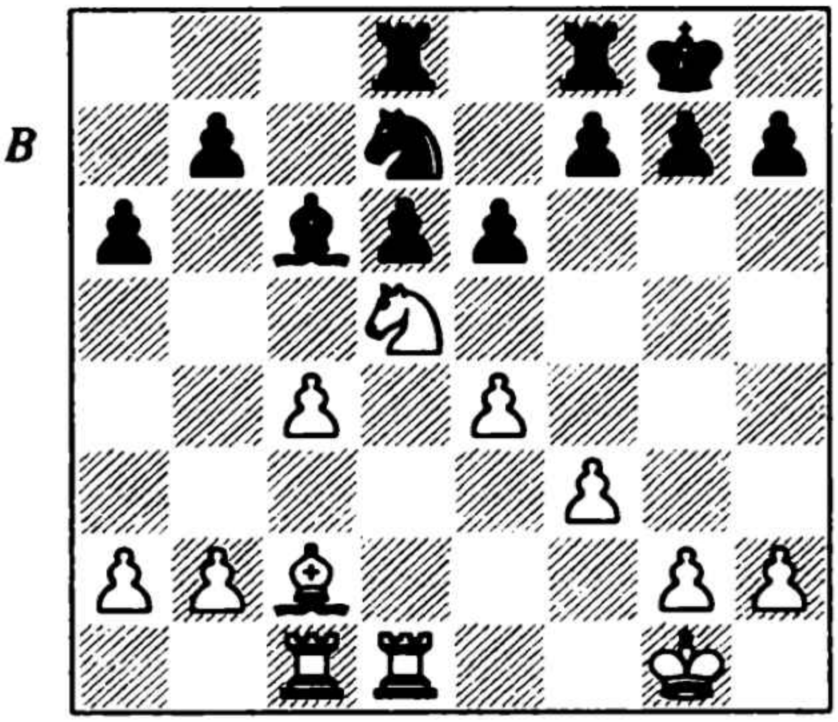
16...♕e5 17 ♖xd6 ♘g4 is unsound in view of 18 g3 ♕h5 19 h4.

17 ♘xb6 ♗c6

18 f3 ♘d7!

Black had relied on this move to get him out of trouble. Now 19 ♘xd7 (or 19 ♘a4 ♘e5 20 ♗b3 g5! holds the balance) 19...♖xd7 20 ♖d2 ♖fd8 21 ♖ad1 ♔f8 is dead equal.

19 ♘d5! *(D)*



This unexpected reply throws Black, unjustifiably, into a state of confusion.

19 ... ♗xd5

Caught by surprise, Rossetto fails to find the most accurate reply: 19...♘e5! (also tenable is 19...exd5 20 exd5 ♘e5 21 dxc6 bxc6 22 b3 c5 23 ♗e4 ♖fe8) 20 ♘e7+ (if 20 ♘e3, then 20...g5!) 20...♔h8 21 ♘xc6 bxc6 22 ♗a4 g5! followed by ...♔g7-f6-e7 =.

20 exd5 e5

Safer is 20...♘e5 21 ♗e4 b6 (not 21...f5? 22 dxe6!).

Playing for the big breakthrough on c5.

21 ... g6

After 21...a5 22 a3 axb4 23 axb4 ♖a8 24 ♗f5! White holds the advantage.

22 ♗a4 b6

22...♘b6 is met by 23 ♗b3 followed by c5.

23 ♖d3 f5?

Oblivious to the danger! Black's best defence is 23...a5 24 a3 (Black should hold after 24 ♗xd7 ♖xd7 25 bxa5 bxa5 26 c5 dxc5 27 ♖xc5 a4) 24...f5 and it's hard for White to make progress. Black should never allow c5 without first forcing White to make the concession of exchanging the bishop for the knight.

24 ♖a3!

The threat is simply 25 ♗xd7. The veiled and seemingly insignificant attack on Black's a-pawn is the means of forcing him to drop the protection of the c5 square.

24 ... ♘b8

Forced. On 24...♘f6, 25 ♗c6 wins a pawn. The only other try is 24...a5 25 bxa5 bxa5 26 ♗c6! ♘c5 (26...♘b8 is met by 27 ♗b5!; instead 26...♘b6 27 ♖b1! ♘xc4? allows 28 ♖c3 ♘d2 29 ♖b2 trapping the knight) 27 ♖xa5 and White should win.

25 c5! bxc5

25...b5 26 ♗b3 ♖f7 27 c6 ♖c7 28 ♖a5! ♔f7 29 a4 bxa4 30 ♖xa4 ♔e7 31 ♗c4 picks off the a-pawn.

After 27...♘d7 (or 27...♖c8 28 ♖ac3, keeping the bind), 28 ♖c7 ♘f6 29 ♗b3 ♔h8 30 ♖xa6 ♘xd5 31 ♗xd5 ♖xd5 32 ♖aa7 wins. Black's game collapses once the heavy guns penetrate.

28 ♖b3 ♖f7

29 d6! ♘d7

The pawn is obviously immune. So Black attempts to revive his knight.

30 ♖c7 ♘f8

Another hopeless line is 30...♘f6 31 ♖bb7 ♖xc7 32 dxc7 ♖c8 33 ♗b3 ♘e8 34 ♖b8 ♘d6 35 ♖xc8 ♘xc8 36 ♗e6, etc.

31 ♖bb7 ♖xc7

32 dxc7 ♖c8

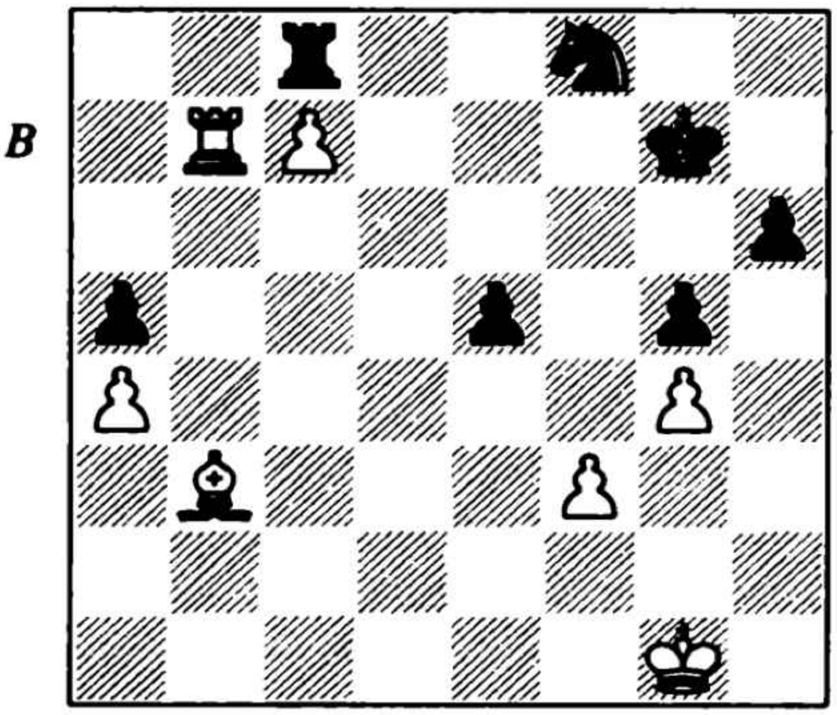
33 ♗b3!

Completely immobilising Black. He is reduced to pawn moves.

35 h3 g5

36 g4 fxg4

37 hxg4 *(D)* **1-0**



Zugzwang! Black has run right out of satisfactory pawn moves. On 37...♔f6, 38 ♖b8 wins a piece, while 37...♘g6 loses to 38 ♗e6. On any rook move, say 37...♖e8, there follows 38 c8♕+.

Game 6

Fischer – Shocron [Argentina]

Mar del Plata 1959

Ruy Lopez

A small oversight

Fischer's opening repertoire has been less extensive than most practising grandmasters', yet his contributions to theory have been numerous. 20 g5!? is one of his innovations. However, it is not responsible for Shocron's defeat. Neither is Shocron's response; in retrospect, his system of defence seems surprisingly adequate. Nevertheless, after defending sensibly, Shocron outfoxes himself. Thinking he has seen one move further than his adversary, he provokes a combination. But his vision is one move short. In consequence, though otherwise it had withstood all of Fischer's assaults, his game crumbles.

1 e4 e5
2 ♘f3 ♘c6
3 ♗b5 a6
4 ♗a4 ♘f6
5 0-0 ♗e7
6 ♖e1 b5
7 ♗b3 d6
8 c3 0-0
9 h3

For the immediate 9 d4!?, see Game 36.

9 ... ♘a5
10 ♗c2 c5
11 d4 ♕c7

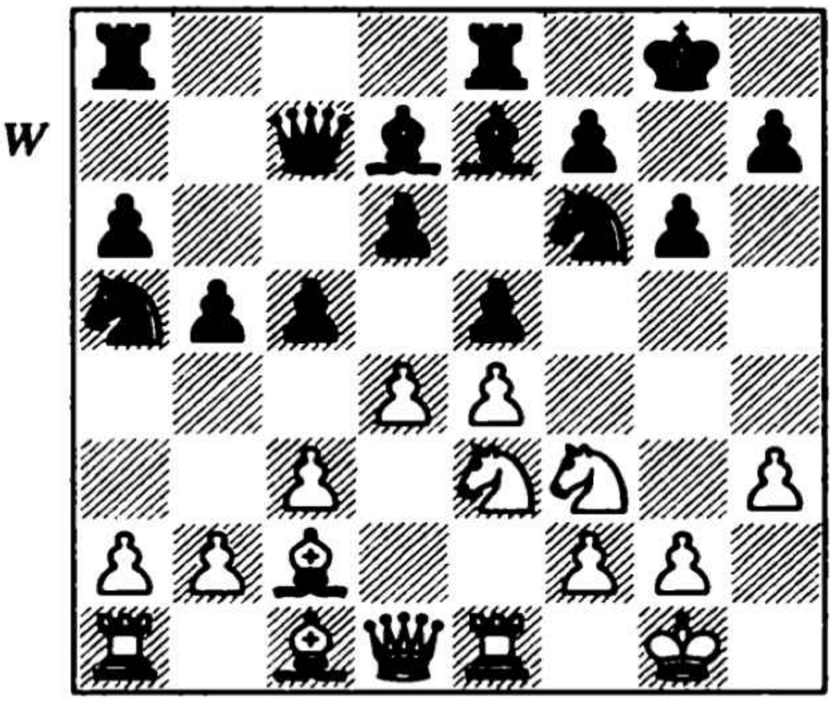
For Keres' 11...♘d7, see Game 38.

12 ♘bd2 ♗d7

Black has many alternatives here, such as 12...♘d7, 12...♔h8, 12...♖e8, 12...♗b7, 12...♖d8, 12...♘c6 and 12...cxd4. I don't think there's any easy way for Black to achieve complete equality—but who knows?

13 ♘f1 ♖fe8
14 ♘e3 g6 *(D)*

The Yugoslav System, popularised by Gligorić and Matanović. The idea is to strengthen the position, and transfer the bishop to f8 while awaiting further developments. Black will only undertake specific counteraction after White has committed himself.



15 dxe5

This positional approach bares the hole on d5, so that White may gain access to it with his knight. Alternate plans ensue after 15 ♗d2 ♗f8 and now:

a) The quiet 16 ♖c1:

a1) 16...♘c6 17 d5! ♘a5 (on 17...♘d8, 18 c4! robs Black of his normal counterplay with ...c4, Olafsson-Ivkov, Buenos Aires 1960, and now White can leisurely build up a strong attack with ♔h2, g4, ♖g1 and later the stock sac ♘f5) 18 b4 ♘b7 19 a4 with a slight advantage.

a2) 16...♗g7? 17 b4 ♘c6 18 ♘d5! ♘xd5 19 exd5 ♘e7 20 dxc5 ♘xd5 (20...dxc5 21 ♗e3 ♕d6 22 ♗xc5 ♕xd5 23 ♗b3!) 21 ♗b3 ♘f6 (21...♗c6 22 ♗g5!) 22 cxd6 ♕xd6 23 ♘g5! ♖f8 24 ♗e3 ♕xd1 25 ♖exd1 h6 26 ♘e4! ♘xe4 27 ♖xd7

♖ac8 28 c4 ♘g5 29 ♗xg5 hxg5 30 c5 1-0 Fischer-Rinaldo, US Open 1957.

b) The sharp 16 b4 cxb4 17 cxb4 ♘c4 18 ♘xc4 bxc4 19 ♖c1 exd4 20 ♘xd4 d5 (not 20...c3 21 ♗b3 ♘xe4 22 ♖xe4! ♖xe4 23 ♕f3 ♗c6 24 ♕xc3 when White wins) 21 exd5 ♖xe1+? (21...♕d6 is a better move) 22 ♗xe1 ♕d6; Fischer-Matanović, Bled 1961. Now, as Keres pointed out, White can keep his extra pawn with 23 ♘f3!. Then 23...♕xd5? loses a piece after 24 ♗c3!, whilst 23...♘xd5 is met by 24 ♗e4.

15 ... dxe5

16 ♘h2

When examined microscopically, Black has his problems. The hole on d5 might be described as 'gaping'.

16 ... ♖ad8

17 ♕f3 ♗e6

After 17...h5? 18 ♘d5! ♘xd5 19 exd5 Black has weakened his kingside.

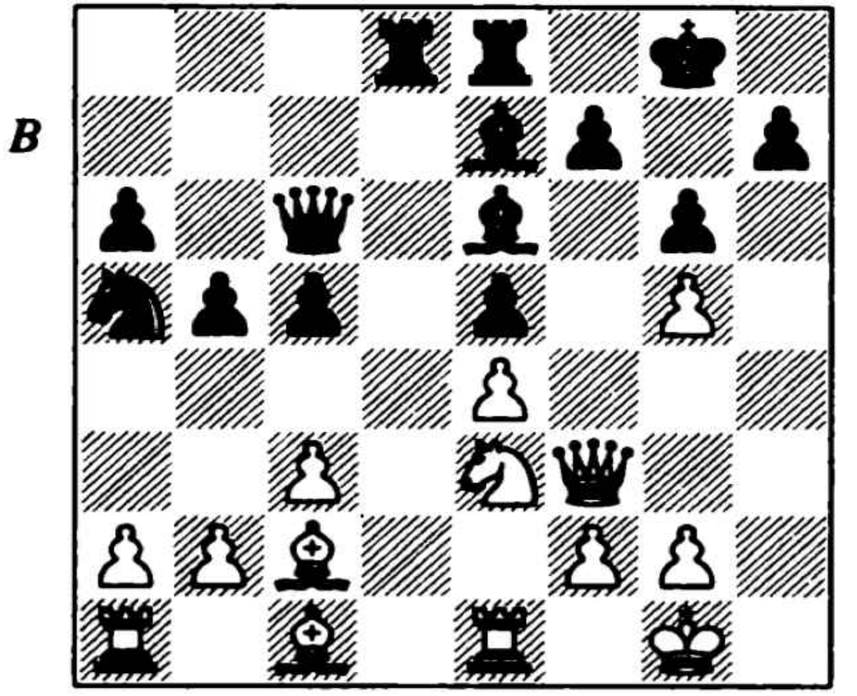
18 ♘hg4 ♘xg4

19 hxg4

Black has a new burden: neutralising the potential attack along the open h-file.

19 ... ♕c6

20 g5!? *(D)*



The old line 20 ♕g3 f6 (20...♗f6 is better) 21 g5! is good for White; Boleslavsky-Tal, USSR 1957. I'd always thought my line was an improvement (the idea is to clear g4 for the knight before Black can force an exchange with ...♘c4) but a closer look at this game shows that Black may have resources.

20 ... ♘c4

20...♗xg5 puts White's concept to the crucial test. After 21 ♘d5! ♗xc1 (21...♗xd5 22 ♗xg5 wins the exchange) 22 ♘f6+ ♔h8! (if 22...♔f8 23 ♖axc1 ♖e7 24 ♘xh7+ ♔g8, White secures an advantage with 25 ♖cd1! ♖a8 [25...♖xd1 26 ♘f6+ ♔g7 27 ♖xd1 ♘b7 28 g4! followed by g5 with a strong attack] 26 ♘f6+ ♔g7 27 ♘d5 ♗xd5 28 ♖xd5) 23 ♖axc1 (after 23 ♘xe8 ♗g5 24 ♘f6 ♘c4! Black has good play for the exchange) 23...♖f8 (not 23...♖e7 24 ♕g3 threatening either ♕xe4 or ♕h4) 24 ♕g3 ♕c7! 25 ♕g5 ♔g7 and now White can force a draw with 26 ♘h5+ etc., or try for more with either 26 f4 or 26 ♖e3.

21 ♘g4 ♗xg4

Black can't allow ♘f6+. As a consequence, White obtains the bishop pair and attacking prospects along the open h-file.

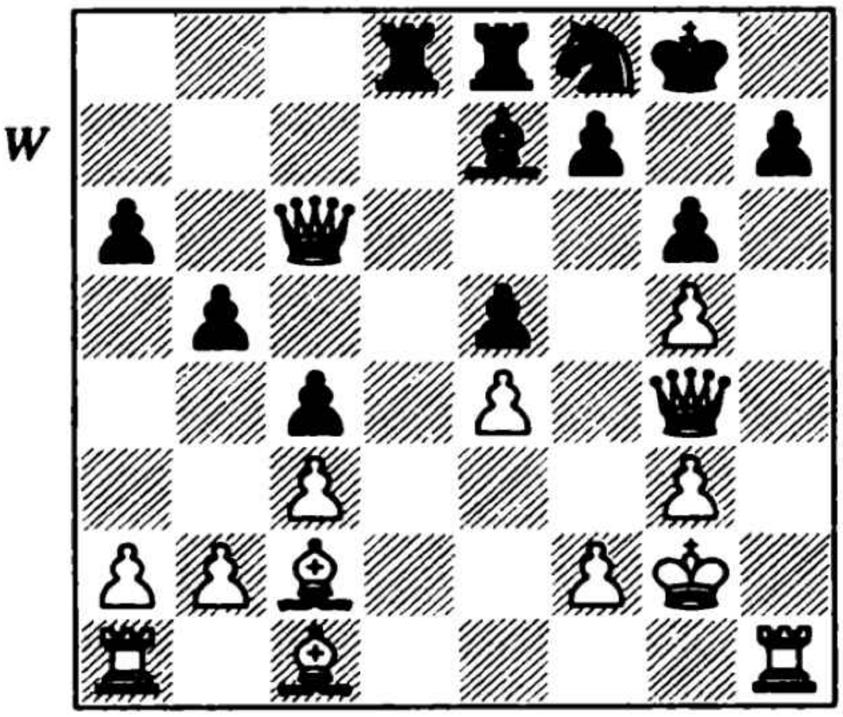
To prevent a4 and, as will be seen, to swing the knight to f8 in order to defend the vulnerable h-pawn. For Unzicker's 22...f6 see Game 10.

23 g3 c4!

The right timing. He's careful to see that a4 is restrained. Wrong, for example, is 23...♘d7 24 a4 b4 25 cxb4 cxb4 26 ♗b3! and this bishop comes crashing back into the game via the open diagonal.

24 ♔g2 ♘d7

25 ♖h1 ♘f8 *(D)*



Phase one is over. Having seen his kingside threats neatly parried, White is compelled to start some action on the opposite wing.

26 b4

26 b3 leads White into trouble after 26...b4! 27 cxb4 c3 28 a3? ♘e6 29 ♕h3 h5 30 gxh6 ♘d4! and wins, while 26 a4 is satisfactorily met by 26...b4! 27 cxb4 ♗xb4 28 a5 (threatening ♗a4) 28...♕c7 with a solid position.

Sharper is 26...a5! 27 a3 (27 bxa5 ♕a6 28 a4 ♕xa5) 27...♖a8 =.

Bad, however, is 26...cxb3 27 ♗xb3 ♕xc3 28 ♗e3 (after 28 ♗b2!? ♕xb2 29 ♕f3 ♘e6 30 ♗xe6, Black can hold on by 30...♖f8!, but not 30...fxe6? 31 ♖xh7! ♖f8 32 ♖ah1! ♕xf2+ 33 ♕xf2 ♖xf2+ 34 ♔xf2 ♖d2+ 35 ♔f3 ♗xg5 36 ♖h8+ mating) 28...♖d7 (not 28...♕c8? 29 ♕f3 ♘e6 30 ♖xh7! winning), when 30 ♖xh7! should win.

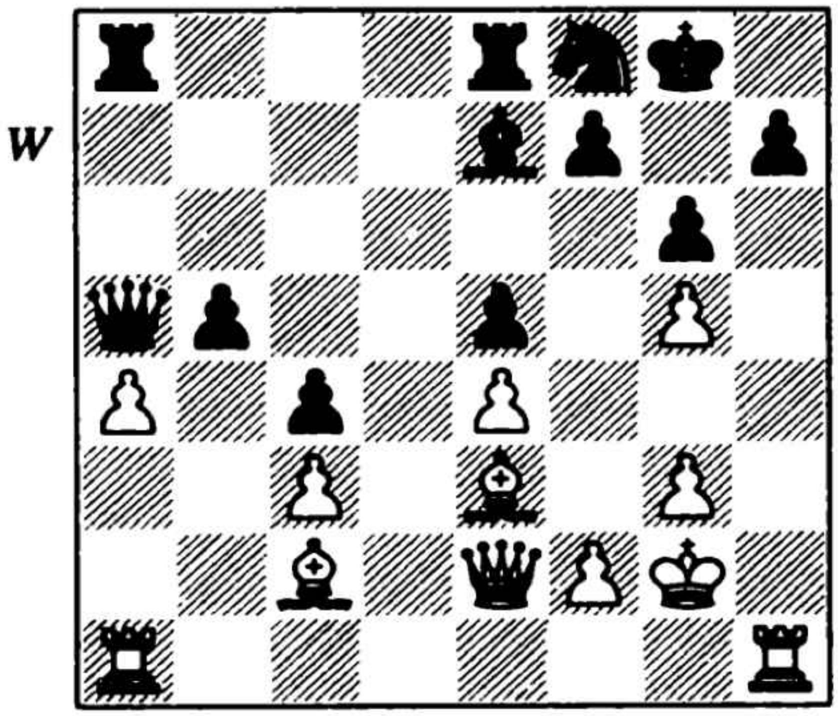
27 ♕e2 a5

28 bxa5 ♕a6

29 ♗e3 ♕xa5

30 a4 ♖a8 *(D)*

30...♕xc3! 31 axb5 is equal.



31 axb5 ♕xb5

More active is 31...♕xc3! (e.g. 32 ♖ac1 ♗a3!), but not 31...♕xa1? 32 ♖xa1 ♖xa1 33 ♕xc4 when Black can resign.

32 ♖hb1 ♕c6

33 ♖b6! ♕c7

34 ♖ba6

Obtaining control of the a-file.

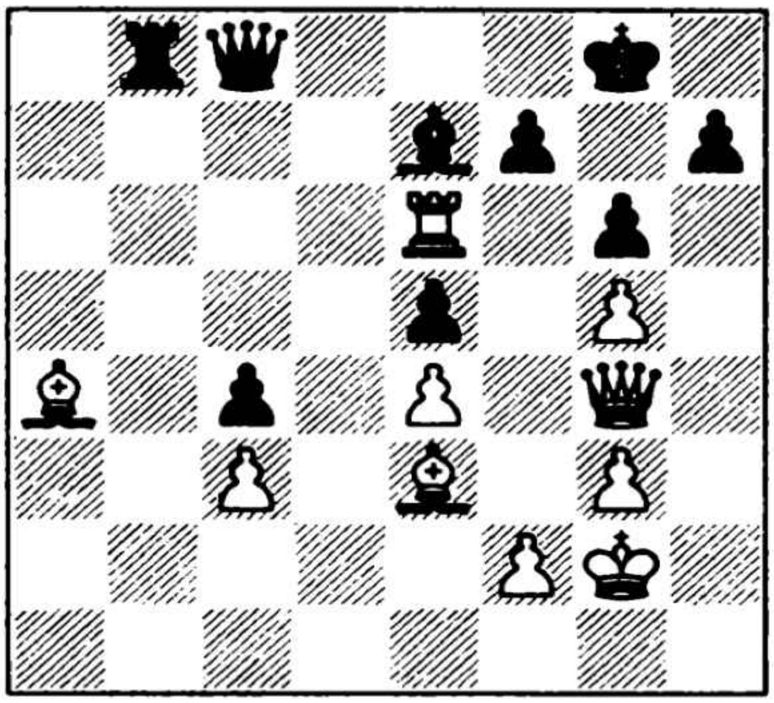
34 ... ♖xa6
35 ♖xa6 ♖c8
36 ♕g4 ♘e6

Bringing the knight back into the game. Wrong would be an attempt to simplify with 36...♗c5 37 ♗xc5 ♕xc5 38 ♗a4! and Black has trouble finding a move, e.g. 38...♘e6 39 ♗d7, or 38...♖d8 39 ♖c6 ♕a7 40 ♖xc4 ♖d2 41 ♕f3 staying a pawn ahead.

37 ♗a4 ♖b8
38 ♖c6 ♕d8?

Up to here Shocron has defended coolly, but now he makes a fatal miscalculation. Correct is 38...♕d7! and it's not clear how White can improve his position any further. If 39 ♔h2 (not 39 ♖xc4 ♕d3! 40 ♖c6 ♖b1 with a strong attack) 39...♖b1! 40 ♖b6 (after 40 ♖xc4 ♕d3 41 ♖c8+ ♔g7 42 ♕h4 ♗xg5! 43 ♗xg5, Black has 43...♖h1+! 44 ♔xh1 ♕f1+ with a perpetual) 40...♕d3 41 ♖xb1 (not 41 ♖xe6? ♕f1!) 41...♕xb1 42 ♗d7 ♘c7! (on 42...♘c5, 43 ♗c6 followed by ♗d5 should win) 43 ♗c6 ♕d3! with drawing chances.

39 ♖xe6! ♕c8! *(D)*



Blow for blow! Apparently Shocron was well prepared for this trick, having seen that 39...fxe6? 40 ♕xe6+ ♔f8 41 ♕xe5 is crushing.

Now how does White avoid losing material?

40 ♗d7! 1-0

This is the shot he overlooked. On 40...♕xd7, 41 ♖xg6+ wins Black's queen.

Game 7

F. Olafsson [Iceland] – Fischer

Zurich 1959

King's Indian Defence

Pride goeth

Miscalculating, as he explains in his notes, Fischer rapidly gets into trouble and is thrown on the defensive. Olafsson quietly strengthens his attacking

prospects and seems well on the road to victory. But he tries, prematurely, to force the issue (21 ♘b1) and, as the game opens up, loses the initiative, although he seems to be blissfully unaware of it. He fails to foresee the power of the riposte to his 24 ♕d2. Still blind to the danger, while seeking a forced win, he misses several opportunities to equalise. In extreme time pressure, Olafsson is compelled to exchange queens under particularly unfavourable circumstances. The resulting endgame holds no further surprises.

1 c4 ♘f6
2 ♘c3 g6
3 d4 ♗g7
4 e4 d6
5 ♘f3 0-0
6 ♗e2 e5
7 d5 ♘bd7
8 ♗g5

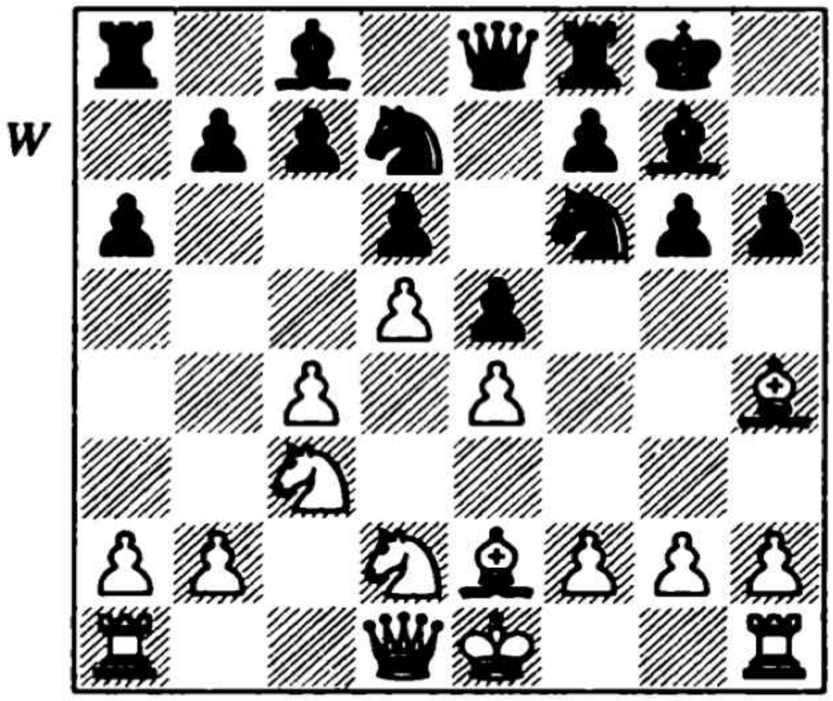
Steinitz automatically gave this pin a question mark. Since there is no real threat involved (because the bishop is worth more than the knight) Black can now gain time by kicking it around.

Petrosian has had some success with this treatment. The idea is to restrain ...♘e8 and the subsequent ...f5.

8 ... h6
9 ♗h4 a6

This slow system has never been refuted. But better is 9...g5! 10 ♗g3 (Black's break with ...f5 has now been blunted, but on the other hand White's bishop on g3 is deadwood) 10...♘h5! 11 h4 (the latest wrinkle; 11 ♘d2 ♘f4 12 0-0 ♘xe2+ 13 ♕xe2 f5 14 exf5 ♘f6 15 c5 ♗xf5 16 ♖ac1 ♖f7! 17 ♘c4 ♗f8 is better for Black; Wexler-Reshevsky, Buenos Aires 1960) 11...♘xg3! 12 fxg3 gxh4! 13 ♖xh4 (if 13 ♘xh4 ♕g5 14 ♘f5 ♘f6 or 13 gxh4 f5 14 exf5 ♘f6 15 0-0 ♗xf5) 13...f5 14 ♕c2 ♘c5 15 ♗d3 ♕f6 with advantage; Damjanović-Hort, Sarajevo 1964.

10 ♘d2 ♕e8 *(D)*



The idea is to free the knight and thus make possible the break with ...f5. In some variations, the queen may help to support ...b5 also, particularly if White elects to castle long.

11 g4!?

In the Candidates' Tournament, 1959, Tal essayed against me the quieter 11 0-0 ♘h7 12 b4 ♘g5 (later I tried 12...♗f6!? against him) 13 f3 f5 with chances for both sides. The text is risky and commits White to queenside castling.

11 ... ♘h7

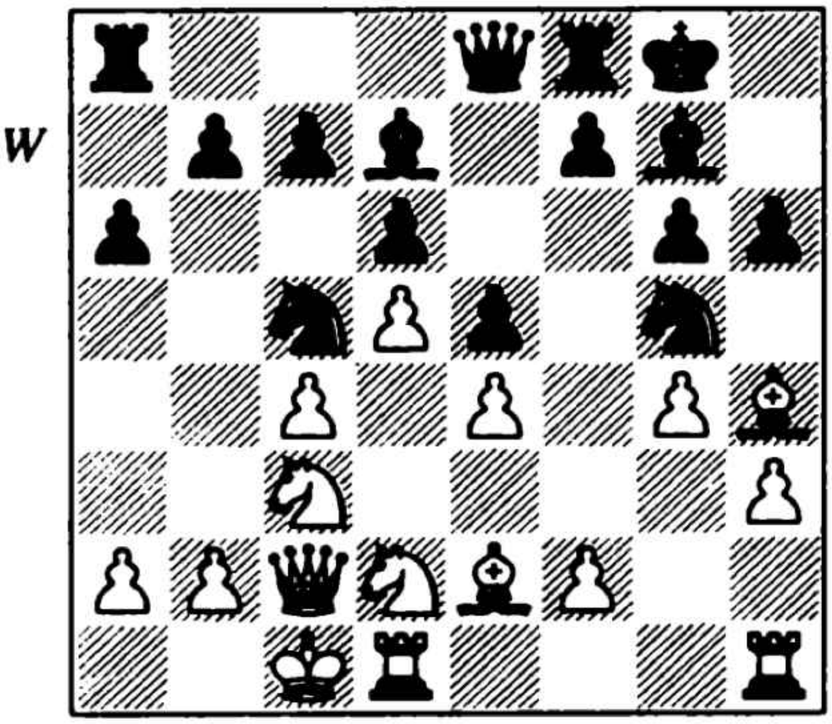
12 ♕c2 ♘g5?

Intending ...♘h3-f4, but White's simple reply brands it as a mistaken plan. Correct is 12...♘c5 13 0-0-0 (13 b4 ♘d7 leaves White with a shaky game) 13...f5 =.

13 h3! ♘c5

14 0-0-0 ♗d7 *(D)*

Weak is 14...f5 15 ♗xg5! hxg5 16 gxf5 gxf5 17 ♖dg1.



15 f3 ♘a4

15...b5!? 16 b4 ♘b7 may not be too bad.

16 ♘xa4 ♗xa4

17 b3 ♗d7

18 ♗f2 c5!

19 h4

Black's game springs to life after 19 dxc6? bxc6 20 ♘b1 d5 21 exd5 (or 21 ♗c5 d4 22 ♗xf8 ♗xf8 with a juicy position) 21...cxd5 22 ♖xd5

19 ... ♘h7

20 ♗e3 b5

21 ♘b1?

Intending ♕d2, but correct is 21 ♗d3! (if 21 h5, then 21...♘g5) maintaining the bind by restraining ...f5.

21 ... f5!

Ready or not—here we come! Olafsson was sure that this break was impossible, or he wouldn't have allowed it.

22 gxf5 gxf5

23 exf5

To prevent ...f4, which would seal the kingside and neutralise White's attack.

23 ... ♗xf5

24 ♕d2

This is the position White played for.

24 ... e4!

The game turns on this shot. 24...♖f6 or 24...h5 cedes the initiative.

25 ♖dg1

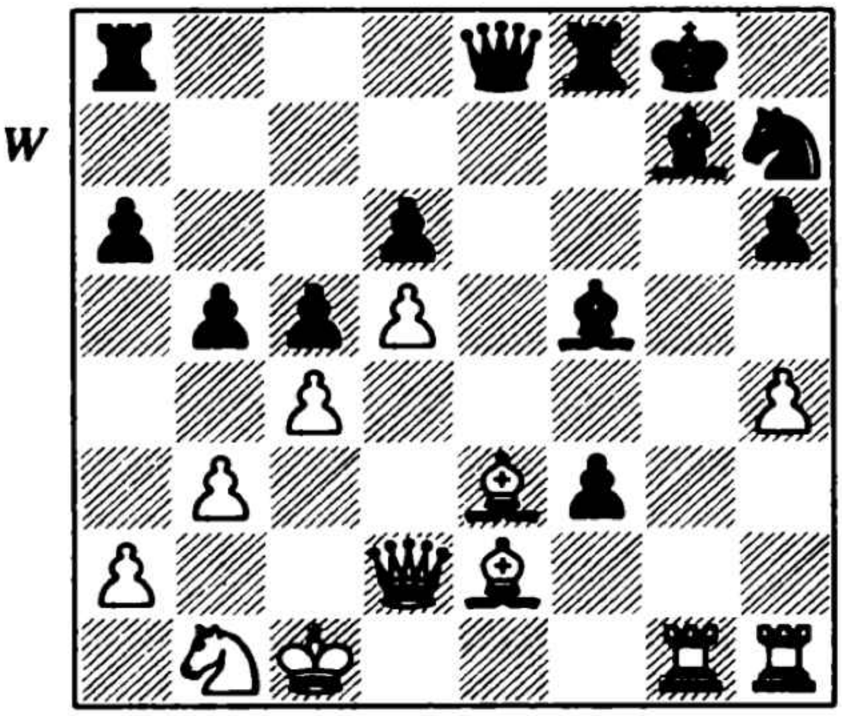
25 ♗xh6 loses to 25...e3! 26 ♗xe3 (if 26 ♕xe3, then 26...♗xb1! 27 ♔xb1 ♕g6+ and Black wins a piece) 26...♗xb1 27 ♔xb1 ♕e5.

25 ... exf3? *(D)*

Correct is 25...♖a7!, when 26 ♗xh6 exf3 transposes to the game.

26 ♗xh6?

26 ♖xg7+! (Ståhlberg) 26...♔xg7 27 ♗xh6+ ♔h8 28 ♗xf8 ♕xf8 29 ♗xf3 wins a pawn (if 29...♗xb1, 30 ♕c3+).



Olafsson later told me he had underestimated the strength of this defensive move.

27 ♗xg7 ♖xg7
28 ♖xg7+ ♔xg7
29 ♗d3

This is an admission of defeat since Black's f-pawn now becomes dangerously potent. White couldn't play 29 ♗xf3? (nor 29 ♕c3+ ♕e5 30 ♕xf3 ♗xb1 31 ♕g4+ ♗g6) 29...♗xb1 30 ♔xb1 ♖xf3 31 ♕g2+ because of 31...♕g6+ (the saving resource) and Black hangs on to his extra piece. My game hinges on this defence, on the fact that the f-pawn has such divine protection.

29 ... bxc4
30 ♖g1+ ♔h8
31 ♕c3+

Now Black gets another passed centre pawn, but White's defence is difficult anyway. 31 bxc4 f2 32 ♖f1 ♗xd3 33 ♕xd3 ♕e1+ 34 ♔c2 ♘f6 35 ♘d2 ♘g4 wins for Black.

31 ... ♕e5

After 32 ♗xf5 ♖xf5 33 bxc4 ♘f6 White has nothing better than to transpose into the actual game with 34 ♕xe5.

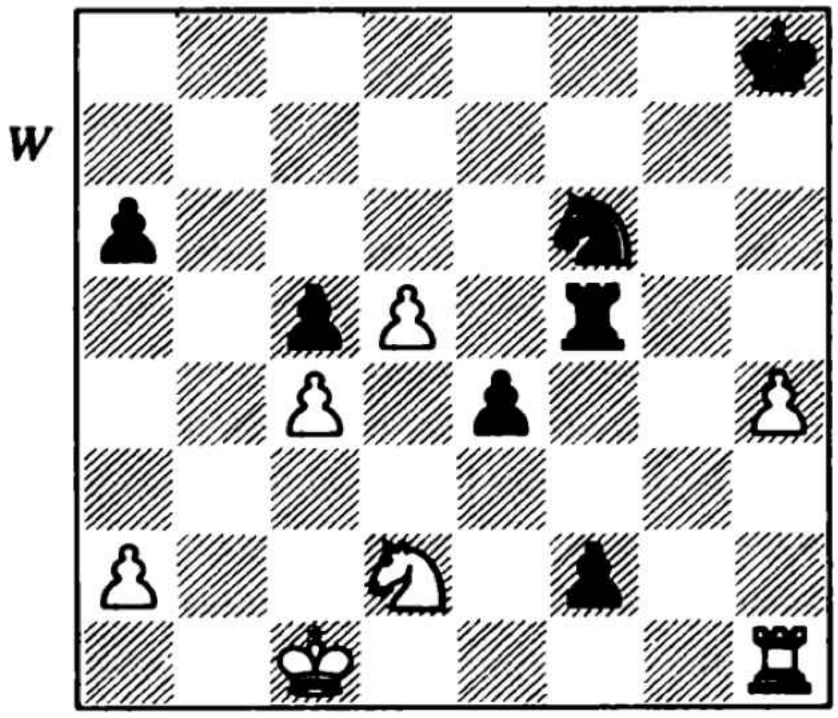
32 ... dxe5
33 ♗xf5 ♖xf5
34 bxc4

34 d6 ♘f6 35 ♘d2! offers no better, e.g. 35...cxb3 36 axb3 e4 37 ♘c4! f2 38 ♖f1 ♘g4! (threatening ...e3) 39 ♔d1 ♘h2! 40 d7 ♖d5+ is decisive.

34 ... ♘f6
35 ♘d2 f2
36 ♖h1

White must keep the f1 square open for the knight.

36 ... e4 *(D)*



37 ♔d1

A better chance is offered by 37 ♘f1 ♘g4! 38 ♔d2 (if 38 d6, then 38...♖f6 39 d7 ♖d6) but 38...♖f3! squelches all counterplay.

37 ... e3
38 ♘f1 ♖e5

40 ♔f3 e2
0-1

One of the black pawns must reincarnate.

Game 8

Fischer – Keres [USSR]

Zurich 1959

Ruy Lopez

Meat and potatoes

Alekhine said, in his prime, that to wrest a point from him it was necessary to win the same game three times: once at the beginning, once in the middle, once at the end. No less a tribute may be paid to Keres.

Each phase of this game is fascinating and hard-fought. Even the errors, and there are more than a few, contribute to making it an unusually complete exhibition of two master craftsmen using all the tools of their trade. While perhaps unglamorous, there is meat here, and potatoes too. And it is likely that as a result of this victory Fischer came to be regarded as a serious contender by the leading Soviet grandmasters—this was the first time he had defeated one.

1 e4 e5
2 ♘f3 ♘c6
3 ♗b5 a6
4 ♗a4 ♘f6
5 0-0 ♗e7
6 ♖e1 b5
7 ♗b3 0-0
8 c3 d6
9 h3 ♘a5
10 ♗c2 c5
11 d4 ♕c7
12 ♘bd2 cxd4

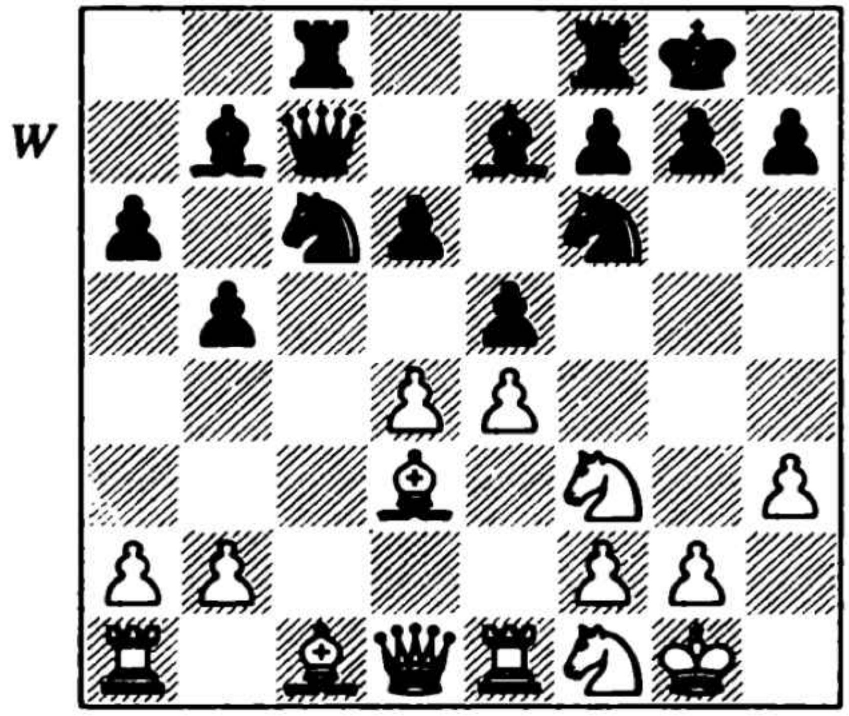
Keres has abandoned 12...♖d8 13 ♘f1 d5? in view of 14 dxe5! dxe4 (if 14...♘xe4, 15 ♕e2 ♗b7 16 ♘e3 threatening ♘xd5) 15 ♘1d2! exf3 16 exf6 ♗xf6 17 ♕xf3 ♗e6 18 ♘e4 with a winning attack.

13 cxd4 ♗b7
14 ♘f1 ♖ac8
15 ♗d3 ♘c6 *(D)*

In a later game, Keres played 15...♘d7 against Smyslov at the Candidates' 1959. The game went on 16 ♘e3 (better is 16 d5 f5 17 ♘e3! f4 18 ♘f5 ♗d8 19 ♗d2!) 16...exd4 17 ♘xd4 ♗f6 18 ♘df5 g6 =.

16 ♘e3 ♖fe8

Black already has difficulties. On 16...♘xd4, 17 ♘xd4 exd4 18 ♘f5



♖fe8 19 ♗g5 is strong. Not 16...♘b4? 17 ♗b1 ♗xe4?? 18 ♗xe4 ♘xe4 19 a3 ♘c6 20 ♘d5, etc.

17 ♘f5?

A superficial plan. Correct is 17 d5! ♘b4 (if 17...♘b8, 18 a4!) 18 ♗b1 a5 19 ♕e2! ♘d7 (if 19...♕b6, 20 ♘f5!) 20 ♗d2 ♕b6 21 a3 ♘a6 22 b4 followed by ♗d3 with a queenside bind.

17 ... ♗f8
18 ♗g5 ♘d7
19 ♖c1 ♕b8

To get out of the pin.

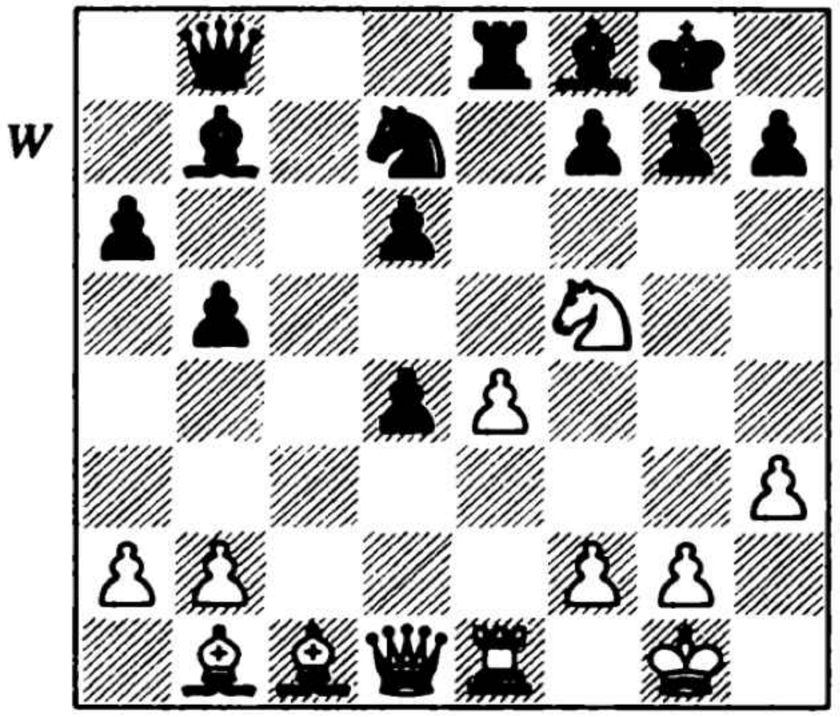
20 ♗b1 ♘xd4
21 ♘3xd4 ♖xc1?

Overlooking White's follow-up. After the careful 21...exd4 22 ♖xc8 ♕xc8 23 ♕xd4 ♘c5! White has precisely nothing.

22 ♗xc1 exd4 *(D)*
23 ♘h6+!

Keres probably expected the tame 23 ♕xd4 ♘c5 =.

23 ... gxh6
24 ♕g4+ ♔h8



Regaining the piece. Black's extra pawn is meaningless in view of his mangled pawn formation.

25 ... ♗d5!

An energetic manoeuvre! This bishop is headed, if circumstances permit, to reinforce the defence of Black's weakened kingside.

26 ♕f5 ♖e5!
27 ♕f3 f5!

Aggressive defence!

28 ♗f4! ♖e8

After 28...♖e7 29 ♕d1 ♗xe4 30 ♗xe4 fxe4 31 ♕xd4+ ♗g7 32 ♕d5! White maintains pressure against the weak pawns.

29 ♕h5! ♗xe4
30 f3 ♗c6
31 ♖c1!

Not 31 ♖xe8? ♗xe8 32 ♕xf5? ♗g6! and Black wins!

31 ... ♗d7
32 ♗xh6

A difficult choice. The alternative was 32 ♗xf5 ♗xf5 33 ♕xf5 with possibilities of probing Black's sick

32 ... ♖e6!

33 ♗xf8

33 ♗f4 ♕e8! looks tenable.

33 ... ♕xf8

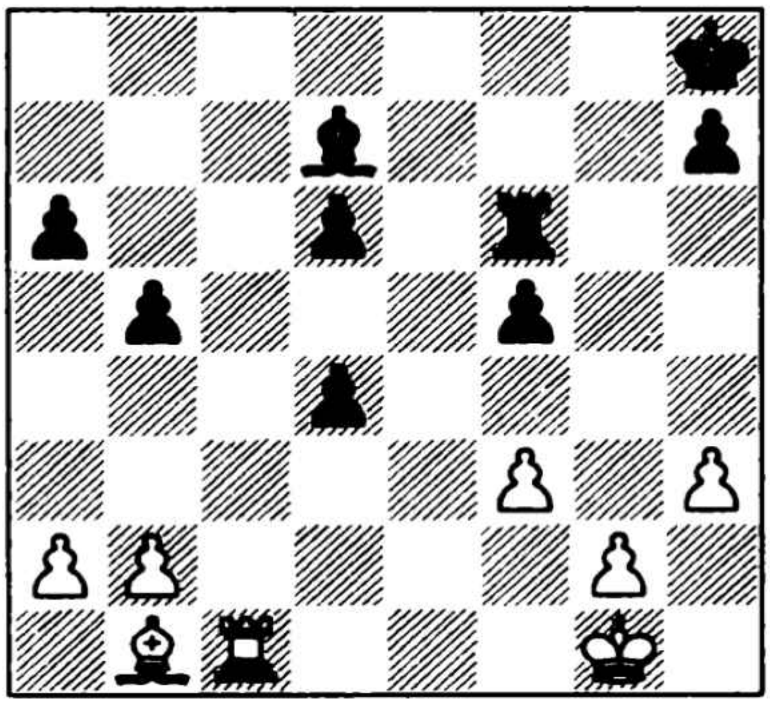
34 ♕h4!

34 ♕xf5?? loses to 34...♖e1+, and 34 ♗xf5?? to 34...♖h6. The text forces Black into an ending where his weak pawns can't be concealed by tactical tricks. 34 ♖c7 ♕e7 holds, e.g. 35 ♗xf5? ♖e1+ 36 ♔h2 (36 ♔f2 ♕e3+ 37 ♔g3 ♕e5+) 36...♕e5+ and Black wins.

34 ... ♕f6

Not 34...♕g7 35 ♖c7 ♖e2?, when 36 ♕d8+ ♖e8 37 ♖xd7! ♖xd8 38 ♖xd8+ wins.

35 ♕xf6+ ♖xf6 *(D)*



36 ♔f2?

Losing a vital tempo, which gives Black time to rush his king toward the centre. At the time I rejected 36 ♖c7 because I couldn't see a winning continuation after 36...♖f7 (if 36...♗e6, 37 b3! squelches all counterplay), but I underestimated the strength of 37 ♖a7! (37 ♗xf5 ♖xf5 38 ♖xd7 ♖d5 39 ♔f2 d3 40 ♔e1 ♖e5+ 41 ♔d1 ♖e2 should draw) 37...♗e6 38 ♖xa6 ♖c7 39 ♔f2 ♖c1 40 ♗d3 and Black's pawns are hopelessly weak.

36 ... ♔g7!

37 ♖c7 ♖f7

38 ♔e2

Now 38 ♖a7 loses all of its effectiveness after the reply 38...♗c8.

38 ... f4!?

A risky selection in time-pressure, aimed against 39 ♔d3?? ♗f5+. Best is simply 38...♔f6 (on 38...♗e6, 39 ♖c6 is strong) 39 ♖a7 (not 39 f4 ♗e6 40 ♖c6? ♖g7 41 ♔f2 ♖xg2+!) 39...♗c8 40 ♖xf7+ ♔xf7 =.

39 ♖a7 ♔f6

Not 39...♗c8 40 ♖xf7+ ♔xf7 41 ♗xh7.

40 ♖xa6 ♖e7+

41 ♔f2

41 ♔d2 is refuted by 41...♖g7.

41 ... ♗e6!

Sacrificing a second pawn for counterplay on the open c-file. On 41...♔e5, 42 ♖a7 keeps Black tied up.

42 ♖xd6 ♔e5

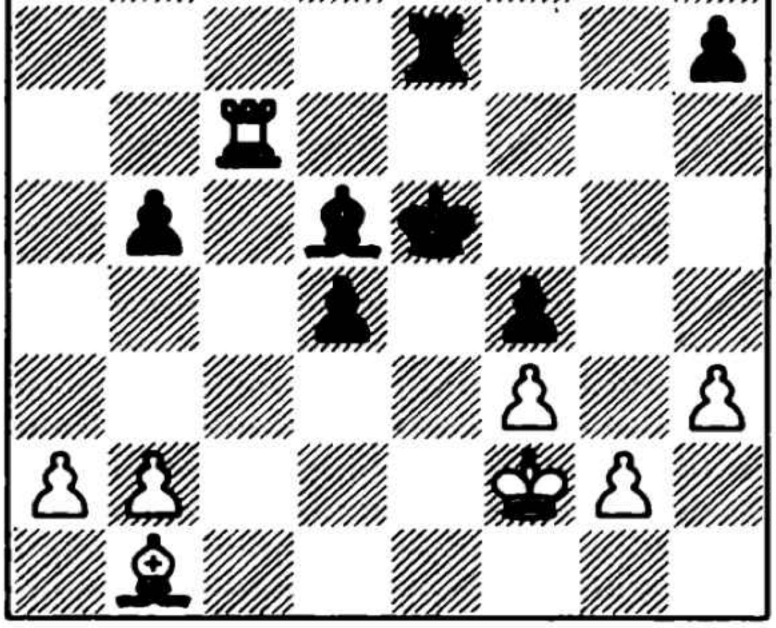
43 ♖c6

After 43 ♖b6 ♗c4 44 b3 d3! 45 bxc4 bxc4 Black's passed pawns should be sufficient to draw.

43 ... ♗d5 *(D)*

44 ♖h6

On 44 ♖c5 ♔d6 45 ♖xb5? ♗c4 is menacing. 44 ♖c1 is too passive to



W

yield White any genuine winning chances.

44 ... ♖c7
45 ♖h5+ ♔d6
46 ♖h6+ ♔e5
47 ♖h5+

Not 47 ♖b6 ♖c1 48 ♗xh7? ♗c4.

47 ... ♔d6
48 ♖f5?

No better is 48 ♖xh7 (if 48 ♗xh7 ♖c1 threatening ...♗c4) 48...♖c1 49 ♗d3 ♗c4. The winning line is 48 b3! (to shut him out from c4). If 48...♖c1, 49 ♗e4! ♗xe4 50 fxe4, etc.

48 ... ♖c1
49 ♗d3 ♖d1

Not 49...♗c4? 50 ♖xf4! ♗xd3 51 ♖xd4+, etc.

50 ♔e2 ♖g1
51 ♔f2 ♖d1
52 ♔e2 ♖g1
53 ♖g5 ♗xa2?

Keres later claimed that 53...♖a1 would have drawn easily, e.g. 54 ♗xh7 ♗c4+ 55 ♔d2 ♖xa2 56 ♔c2 ♖a1.

54 ♗xb5 ♖b1

55...♖xb2 56 ♔xd4 ♗b1! should hold the draw.

56 ♖h5 ♖xb2
57 ♔xd4 ♖xg2
58 ♖xh6+

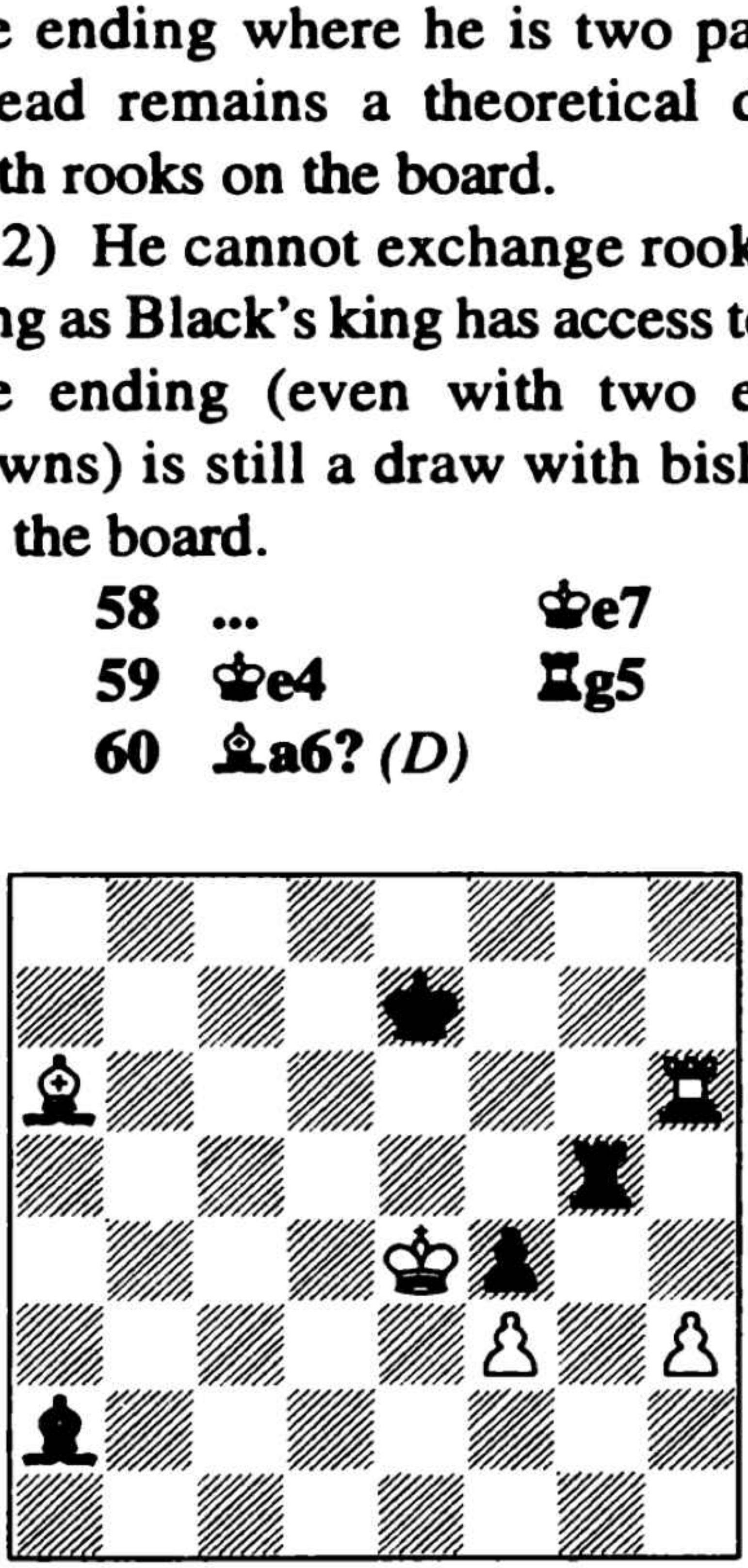
The second adjournment. There are two technical obstacles facing White:

1) He cannot exchange bishops; the ending where he is two pawns ahead remains a theoretical draw with rooks on the board.

2) He cannot exchange rooks so long as Black's king has access to f6; the ending (even with two extra pawns) is still a draw with bishops on the board.

58 ... ♔e7
59 ♔e4 ♖g5
60 ♗a6? *(D)*

B



Keres thought 60 ♗f1! was the winning chance. If 60...♖g1, 61 ♗a6! and Black no longer has the defence mentioned in the next note. The immediate 60 ♗d3 is wrong owing to

60...♗f7! 61 ♔xf4 ♜h5 62 ♜xh5 ♗xh5 followed by ...♗xf3.

60 ... ♗f7?

This slip is fatal. Keres told me he had reached this position in his adjournment analysis, but had forgotten his drawing line over-the-board. Right is 60...♗b1+! 61 ♔xf4 ♜f5+ 62 ♔g4 ♜f6 63 ♜xf6 ♔xf6 with the aforementioned blockade.

61 ♗c8!

Heading for g4. Not 61 ♔xf4? ♜h5 drawing.

61 ... ♜g6

After 61...♜c5 62 ♗g4 ♜c4+ 63 ♔e5 White's penetration is decisive, even though he doesn't win a second pawn immediately.

62 ♜h7 ♔f8

63 ♗g4 ♜g7

Not 63...♜xg4? 64 ♜xf7+!.

64 ♜h6

White still can't afford to trade rooks.

64 ... ♜g6

65 ♜xg6! ♗xg6+

66 ♔xf4 ♔g7

67 ♔g5!

This makes all the difference. Black's king can no longer set up a blockade on f6.

67 ... ♗d3

68 f4 ♗e4

69 h4

Of course not 69 f5? ♗xf5! and White is left with what Hans Kmoch calls 'the impotent pair'.

70 h5 ♗e4

71 h6+ ♔h8

On 71...♔f7, 72 ♗h5+ ♔g8 7 ♗g6 makes progress.

72 ♗f5 ♗d5

73 ♗g6 ♗e6

74 ♔f6 ♗c4

75 ♔g5 ♗e6

76 ♗h5

Back on the right track.

76 ... ♔h7

77 ♗g4! ♗c4

On 77...♗xg4, 78 ♔xg4 ♔xh6 7 ♔f5 wins.

78 f5

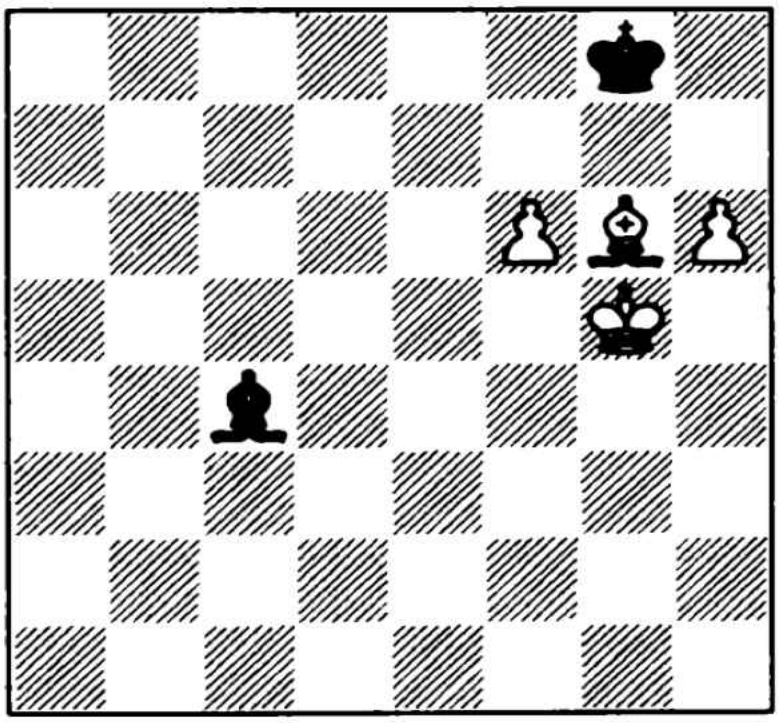
Finally the f-pawn is free to advance.

78 ... ♗f7

79 ♗h5 ♗c4

80 ♗g6+ ♔g8

81 f6 *(D)* **1-0**



On 81...♗b3 82 ♔f4 ♔h8 83 ♔e ♗c4 84 ♔d6 ♗b3 85 ♔e7 ♗c4 8 ♗f7 ♗d3 87 ♗e8! ♗c4 88 ♗d ♗g8 89 ♗e6 ♗h7 90 f7 White's f

Game

Walther [Switzerland] – **Fischer**

Zurich 1959

Sicilian Defence

Betwixt the cup and the lip

Here, against a minor European master, Fischer appears to be busted after seventeen moves, and admits he was ready to resign on move 36. Nevertheless, he extracts a miraculous draw from a hopeless ending, two pawns down. Time and again Walther fumbles, allowing Fischer to prolong the struggle until he gets his break on move 54.

What makes this game memorable is the demonstration it affords of the way in which a grandmaster redeems himself after having started like a duffer; and how a weaker opponent, after masterfully building a winning position, often lacks the technique required to administer the *coup de grâce*. As Capablanca remarked, 'The good player is always lucky.'

1 e4 c5
2 ♘f3 d6
3 d4 cxd4
4 ♘xd4 ♘f6
5 ♘c3 a6
6 ♗g5 e6
7 f4 ♗e7

Sharper is 7...♕b6 8 ♕d2 ♕xb2 9 ♖b1 ♕a3, which I tried with success later in my career.

8 ♕f3 ♘bd7

More exact is 8...♕c7 to prevent 9 ♗c4.

9 0-0-0

Sharper is 9 ♗c4! 0-0 (9...♕c7? 10 ♗xe6! fxe6 11 ♘xe6 ♕b6 12 ♘xg7+ ♔f7 13 ♘f5 with a crushing attack) 10 0-0-0. The text gives Black a chance to repair his earlier inaccuracy.

9 ... ♕c7
10 ♗d3

For 10 ♗e2 see Game 14. For 10 g4 see Games 12 and 15.

10 ... b5
11 ♗xf6

Pointless. Better is 11 a3.

11 ... ♘xf6

Only not 11...♗xf6? 12 ♗xb5! axb5 13 ♘xb5 winning.

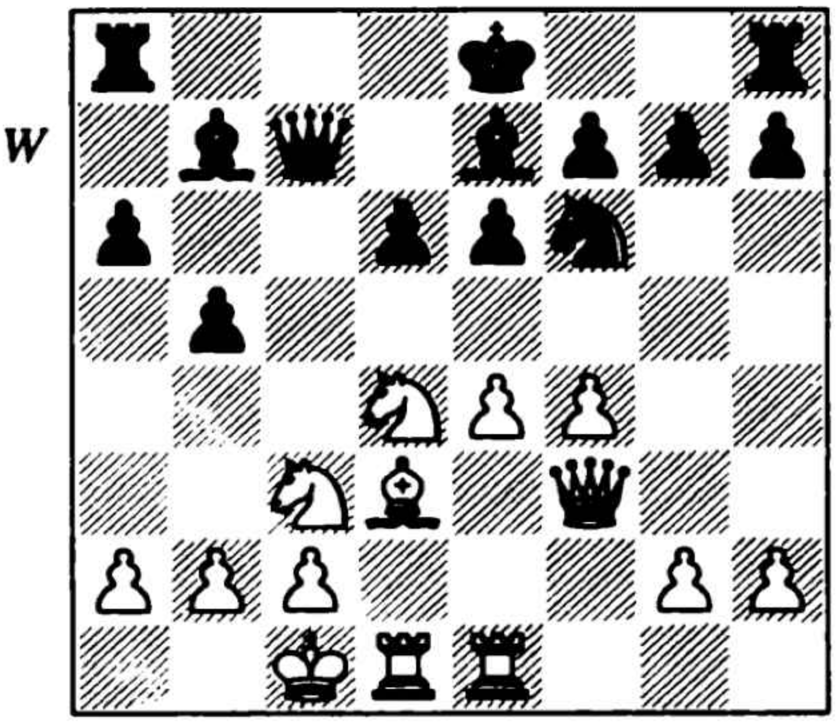
12 ♖he1

12 a3 is necessary. Black comes out alright after 12 e5 ♗b7 13 ♕g3 dxe5 14 fxe5 ♘d7 15 ♖he1 0-0-0!;

Paoli-Tolush, Balatonfüred 1958.

12 ... ♗b7 *(D)*

As I learned (see Game 15) Black should avail himself of ...b4! (followed by ...♗b7 and ...d5) the instant he has the opportunity.



13 ♔b1

At the risk of repeating myself, 13 a3 is mandatory.

13 ... ♖c8?

The disadvantage of this move is that Black loses his option of queenside castling. Right is 13...b4 14 ♘ce2 g6! 15 g4 e5 16 ♘b3 d5 17 ♘d2 0-0 with initiative.

14 g4

14 a3 is still correct. We both suffered from the *ideé fixe* that ...b4 was unplayable.

14 ... ♘d7

15 g5 ♘b6?

15...b4! 16 ♘ce2 ♘c5 still makes a fight of it.

16 f5! e5

Now on 16...b4?, 17 fxe6! splat-

Not 16...♗xg5? 17 ♗xb5+! ♔e7 18 fxe6 fxe6 19 ♘xe6!, etc. But I still thought Black was all right. Walther's next move quickly disabused me of that notion.

17 f6! gxf6

I'd overlooked that on 17...exd4, 18 ♘d5! is deadly.

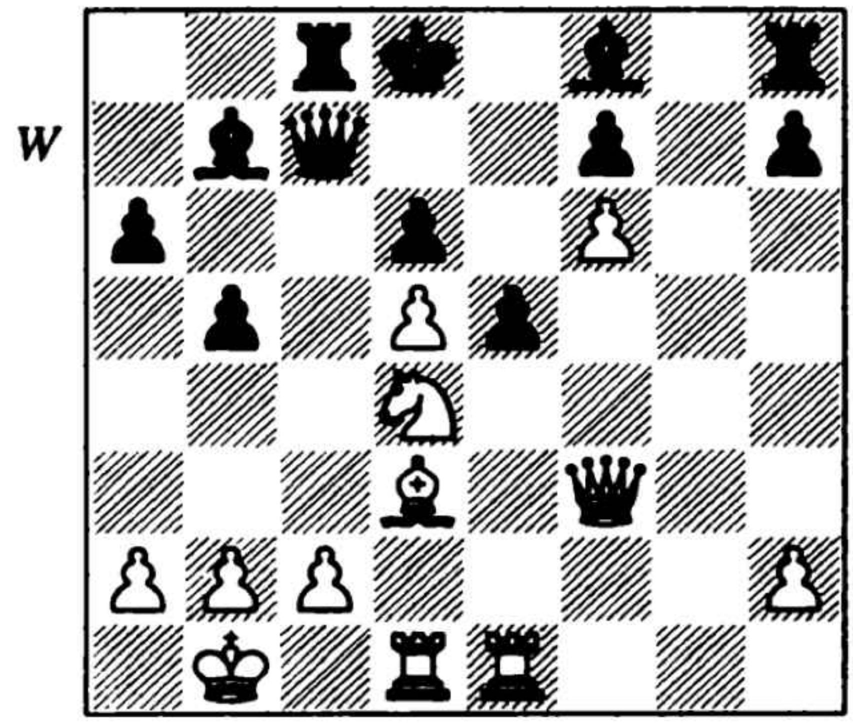
18 gxf6 ♗f8

19 ♘d5!

Black's busted.

19 ... ♘xd5

20 exd5 ♔d8 *(D)*



21 ♘c6+!

A wise investment. The pawn sac is insignificant compared to the opening of the centre files against Black's king.

21 ... ♗xc6

22 dxc6 ♕xc6

23 ♗e4 ♕b6

24 ♕h5 ♔c7

25 ♗f5! ♖d8

26 ♕xf7+ ♔b8

27 ♕e6 ♕c7

30 f7

Definitely not 30 ♖xd6?? ♕h1+.

30 ... ♗g7
31 ♖cd3 ♗f8
32 ♕xe5!

Should be decisive. ‘Any resemblance to chess is purely coincidental.’

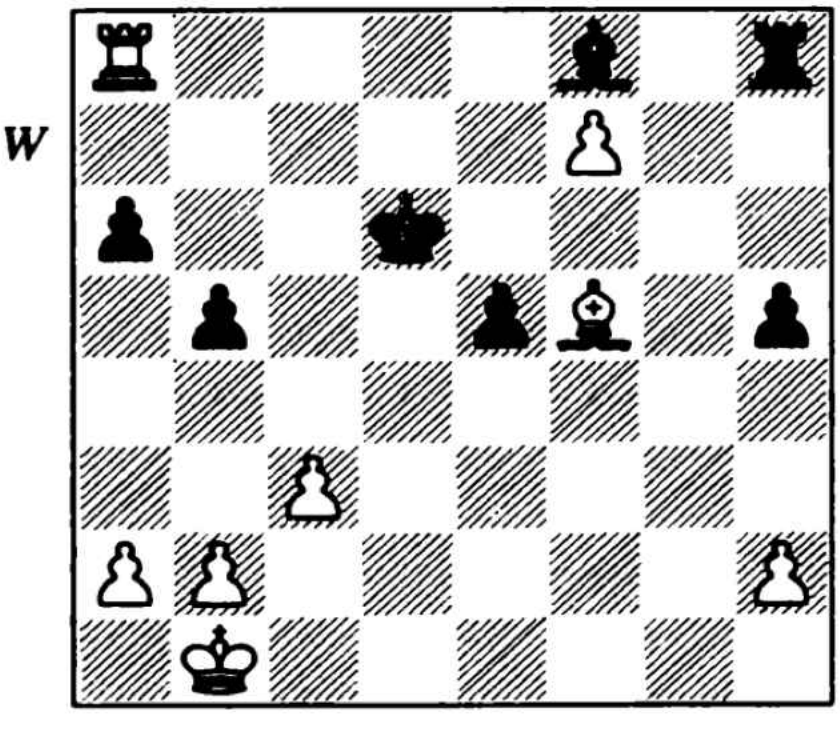
32 ... dxe5
33 ♖xd8+ ♔a7
34 ♖1d7 h5
35 ♖xb7+ ♔xb7
36 c3 ♔c7

Ordinarily the curtain would be drawn here, but I just wanted to see what he’d do next.

37 ♖a8(?)

The wrong track. On 37 ♖e8! Black resigns.

37 ... ♔d6 *(D)*



38 ♖xa6+

I was still prepared to resign after 38 ♖e8!. Black has absolutely no moves. White simply strolls his king to e4, creating zugzwang.

39 ♖e6+

Even simpler is 39 ♖a7+ ♔f6 40 ♗d3.

39 ... ♔xf7
40 ♖xe5 b4

Here the game was adjourned. Strangely enough, I began to feel the position contained some swindling prospects.

41 cxb4 ♗xb4
42 h3 ♔f6
43 ♖b5 ♗d6
44 ♗e4

On 44 a4, then 44...♖b8! forces the exchange of rooks (e.g. 45 ♖d5? ♗e5). The pure opposite-coloured bishop ending is Black’s best chance to draw.

44 ... ♖e8

My first threat in the entire game!

45 ♖f5+ ♔g7
46 ♗f3 ♖e1+
47 ♔c2 ♖f1!
48 ♖d5

The threat was 48...♖f2+ 49 ♔b1 (if 49 ♔b3?, then 49...♔g6 wins a piece) 49...♖f1+ with a draw.

48 ... ♖f2+
49 ♖d2

49 ♔b1 ♗a3! 50 bxa3 ♖xf3 51 ♖xh5 ♖xa3 is also hopeless for Black.

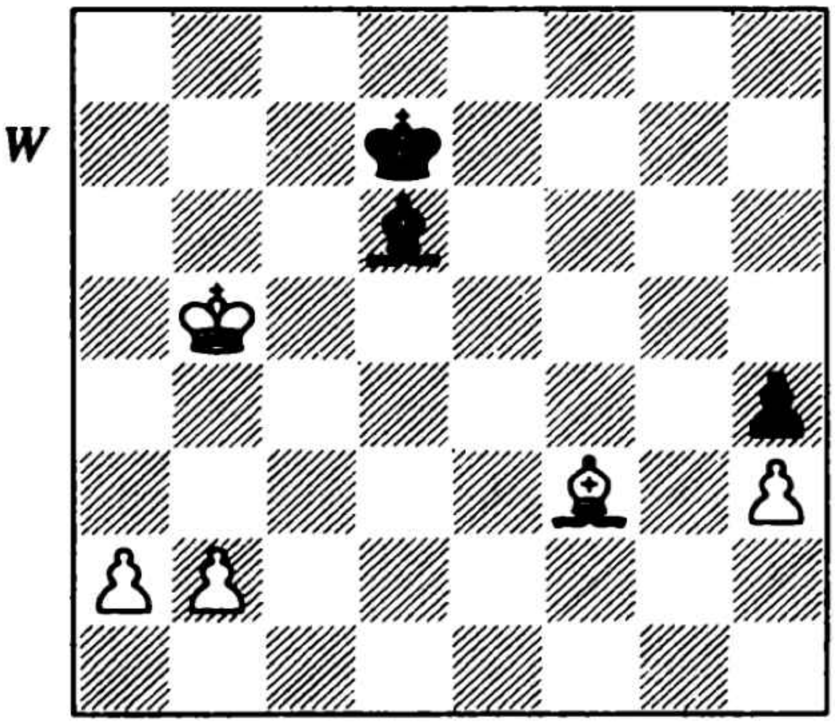
49 ... ♖xd2+

On 49...♖xf3, 50 ♖xd6 ♖xh3 51 a4, etc.

50 ♔xd2 h4
51 ♔d3 ♔f6

52 ♔c4 ♔e7

53 ♔b5 ♔d7 *(D)*



54 a4?

This natural push throws away the win! The Swiss endgame composer, Fontana, pointed out the proper method: 54 b4! ♔c7 55 ♔a5! ♔b8 56 b5 ♗a3 57 b6 ♔c8 58 ♔a6 ♔b8 59 ♗g2! and Black is in zugzwang. If 59...♔c8 (or 59...♗c5 60 a4), 60 ♔a7 ♗c5 61 a4, etc.

The theme underlying Black's defence is this: once he succeeds in sacrificing his bishop for both the queenside pawns, then White will be left with the 'wrong bishop' for his h-pawn.

54 ... ♔c7

55 b4 ♔b8

56 a5 ♔a7

57 ♔c4 ♗g3

58 b5 ♗f2

59 ♗e2

59 b6+ is met by 59...♗xb6!

59 ... ♗e3

60 ♔b3 ♗d2

60...♗f2 also draws.

61 b6+ ♔b7

62 ♔a4 ♔c6

63 ♗b5+ ♔c5

½-½

White's pawns are stymied; for example 64 b7 ♗f4 65 a6 ♔b6 is a clear draw.

Game 10

Fischer – Unzicker [W. Germany]

Zurich 1959

Ruy Lopez

Milking the cow

The Ruy Lopez has been so extensively analysed that often both players reel off their first twenty moves in two minutes flat. Nevertheless, it gives rise to situations that call for tact and patience. As Bronstein remarked, "When you play the Ruy, it's like milking a cow." Fischer, here, milks the cow to a fare-

The first twenty-two moves are identical with Game 6. Unzicker then varies with the dubious ...f6, which undermines his e-pawn and leaves him with weak squares. Retribution, though not swift, is sure. Creating simultaneous threats on both wings, Fischer finally infiltrates on the a-file. Black is so tied up that he cannot defend one of his pawns when attacked—making defeat imminent.

1 e4 e5
2 ♘f3 ♘c6
3 ♗b5 a6
4 ♗a4 ♘f6
5 0-0 ♗e7
6 ♖e1 b5
7 ♗b3 d6
8 c3 0-0
9 h3 ♘a5
10 ♗c2 c5

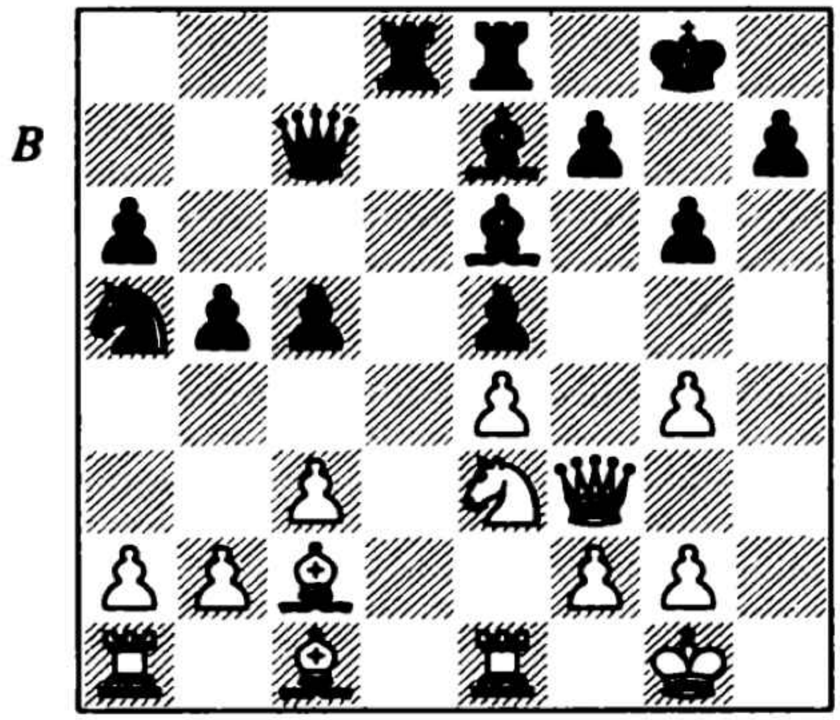
10...c6 11 d4 ♕c7 is an interesting alternative (Rossolimo)—in this case Black avoids weakening d5.

11 d4 ♕c7
12 ♘bd2 ♗d7
13 ♘f1 ♖fe8
14 ♘e3

Tal and Geller recommend 14 b3 and if 14...g6, 15 ♗g5.

14 ... g6
15 dxe5 dxe5
16 ♘h2 ♖ad8
17 ♕f3 ♗e6
18 ♘hg4 ♘xg4
19 hxg4 *(D)*

Against Matanović, at Portorož IZ 1958, I tried the inferior 19 ♘xg4 ♗xg4 20 hxg4 c4 21 g3 ♘b7 22 ♔g2 ♘c5 23 ♖h1 f6 =. Black's knight is already prepared to parachute to d3.



White gets an edge after 19...♘c4 20 ♘d5 ♗xd5 21 exd5.

20 g5!? ♘c4
21 ♘g4 ♗xg4
22 ♕xg4 f6?

For analysis of this position see Game 6. Unzicker prefers active defence. He eliminates the potential pressure along the h-file, it is true, but at the cost of weakening his e-pawn.

23 gxf6 ♗xf6
24 a4! ♘b6
25 axb5 axb5
26 ♗e3

Because both flanks are fluid, White, with his two bishops, is better able to penetrate and exploit the 'loose' pawns.

26...♘c4 is met by 27 ♗b3 instituting an awkward pin.

27 ♖ed1

If he swaps, White gains the a-file; if he doesn't, White keeps the d-file.

27 ... ♔h8

28 b3 ♗g7

Black should ease the pressure by 28...♖xa1 29 ♖xa1 ♖a8 30 ♖xa8+ ♘xa8 though 31 ♕d1! followed by ♕a1! forces an invasion on the queenside.

29 ♕h4 ♗f6

30 ♗g5! ♗xg5

31 ♕xg5

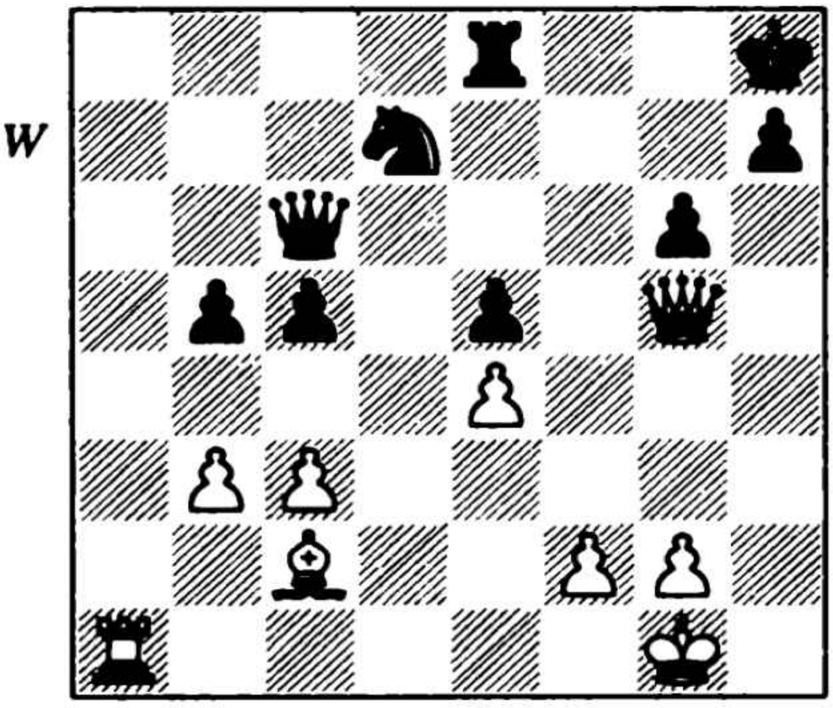
Now White must penetrate on either the a- or d-file. Black's e-pawn has clearly been exposed as a weakling.

31 ... ♖xa1

The threat was 32 ♖xa8 ♘xa8 33 ♖d5.

32 ♖xa1 ♘d7 *(D)*

Apparently defending everything. The immediate 33 ♖a7 can be met by 33...♕d6.



33 ♗d1!

Bringing the bishop into the game puts additional pressure on Black's overburdened pieces.

33 ... ♘f6

Not 33...♕xe4 34 ♗f3 ♕f4 (if 34...♕c2, 35 ♖a7 with a winning attack) 35 ♕xf4 exf4 36 ♗c6 ♖e7 (or 36...♖d8 37 ♖d1) 37 ♖a8+! ♔g7 38 ♖a7 wins a piece.

34 ♖a7

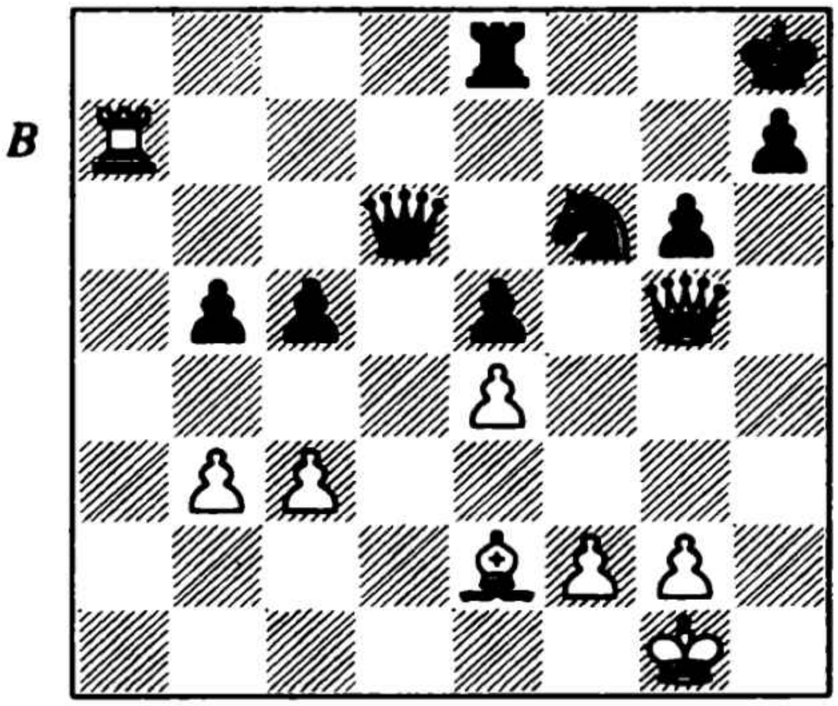
Infiltration!

34 ... ♕d6

On 34...♘xe4?, 35 ♕h6 forces mate.

35 ♗e2! *(D)*

Simply attacking a pawn. Curiously, Black is in too much of a straitjacket to do much about it.



35 ... ♖e7

How can Black defend the b5-pawn?

a) 35...b4? 36 ♖a6 ♘xe4 37 ♕h4 ♕d5 38 ♗f3 ♕d3 39 ♖a7 wins.

b) 35...♘xe4? 36 ♕h6 ♖e7 37 ♕f8 mate.

c) 35...♕b6 36 ♖f7 ♘g8 37 ♕h4 h6 38 ♕g4 ♖d8 39 ♗xb5! wins.

d) 35...♖b8 36 ♖f7 ♘g8 37 ♖d7! ♕f6 (37...♕xd7 38 ♕xe5+ ♕g7 39 ♕xb8 ♕xc3 40 ♕xb5) 38 ♕e3 ♕c6 39 ♖d5 when one of Black's hanging pawns must fall.

36 ♖xe7 ♕xe7

37 ♗xb5 ♔g7

38 ♗e2

The win is still far from clear. White's major technical problem is creating a passed pawn on the queenside while sheltering his king from a perpetual check.

38 ... ♕c7

Threatening ...♘xe4.

39 ♕e3 ♕a5

40 g3 ♕a3

Black should wait around with 40...♕c7.

41 ♔g2

Sharper and possibly immediately decisive is 41 b4! cxb4 42 ♕c5!.

41 ... ♕a5

On 41...♕xb3 42 ♕xc5 ♘xe4 43 ♕xe5+ ♘f6 44 c4 should win.

42 ♕d3 ♕b6

43 ♕c4 ♕c6

44 ♗d3

It's better to refrain from 44 f3, which weakens the king's defences.

44 ... ♕b6

45 b4 cxb4

46 cxb4

Step one is completed: White has a passed b-pawn.

46 ... ♘g4

47 ♕c5 ♕xc5

Forced. 47...♕d8? loses a second pawn after 48 ♗e2.

48 bxc5 ♔f7

49 f4

The idea is to create another passed pawn in the centre.

49 ... ♔e7

50 ♔f3 ♘f6

On 50...h5, 51 ♗c4 maintains the bind (e.g. 51...♔d7 52 ♗f7).

51 ♗b5

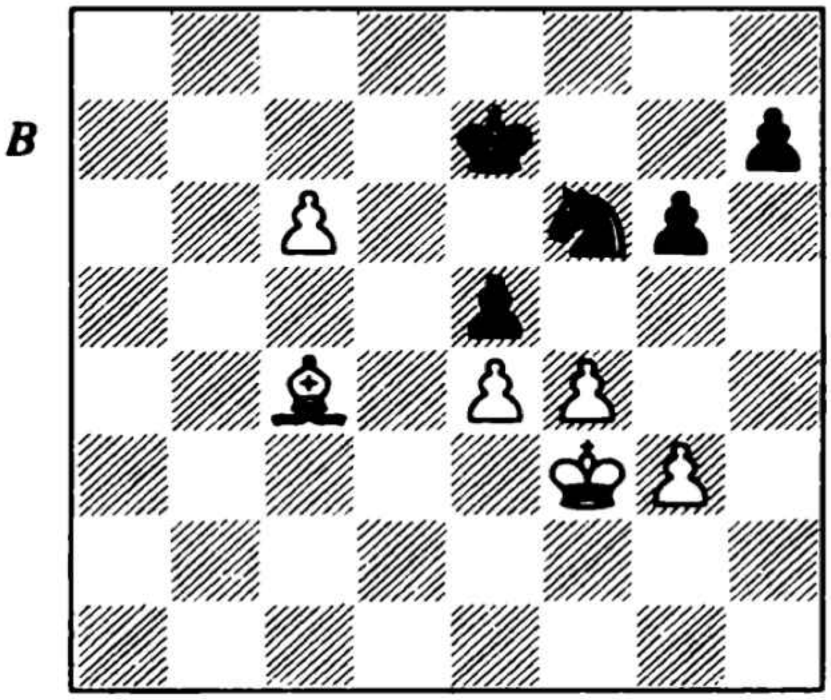
Not 51 fxe5? ♘d7 drawing.

51 ... ♔e6

Striving to keep the blockade as long as possible.

52 ♗c4+ ♔e7

53 c6! *(D)*



53 ... ♘e8

Makes it easy. The best defence was 53...exf4 (53...♔d6? 54 fxe5+ ♔xe5 55 c7) 54 gxf4 ♘e8 55 e5 ♘c7 56 ♔e4 ♘e8 (56...h5 57 ♔f3 wins) 57 ♗g8 ♔f8 58 ♗xh7 ♔g7 59 ♗xg6 ♔xg6 60 f5+ ♔g5 61 f6 ♔g6 62 ♔d5 ♔f7 63 ♔c5 ♔e6 64 ♔b6 wins.

54 fxe5 h6
55 ♔e3 ♘c7
56 ♔d4 h5
57 ♔e3! g5
58 ♗e2 h4
59 gxh4 gxh4
60 ♗c4 ♘e8
61 ♔f4 ♔d8
62 ♔g4 ♔c7
63 ♗f7 ♘g7
64 ♔xh4 ♔xc6
65 ♔g5 1-0

After 65...♔d7, 66 ♔f6 ♘e8+ 67 ♗xe8+ leads to an elementary win.

Game 11

Fischer – Benko [USA]

Belgrade/Bled/Zagreb Ct 1959

Sicilian Defence

Unheard melodies

Paul Morphy is the idol of all the romantics who pine for the swashbuckling chess of yesteryear; but it is rarely possible to succeed with that kind of flamboyance any longer since players now are more evenly matched. A rise in the standard of defence has necessitated a corresponding adjustment in the character of attack. In modern chess most of the beauty resides in the annotations. Brilliancies often exist only as grace notes—because the opposition anticipates and thwarts them with appropriate rejoinders. To the uninitiated, some of the most hard-fought struggles seem devoid of all bravura. That is the situation in this game.

Confronted with a dozen beautiful outlandish losing variations, Benko chooses what appears to be a prosaic one. Is this 'ugliness' not a by-product of skill? Though the reader may feel cheated, and the winner frustrated, does it not argue for the perspicacity of the loser who side-stepped those seductive invitations?

1 e4 c5
2 ♘f3 ♘c6
3 d4 cxd4
4 ♘xd4 ♘f6
5 ♘c3 d6
6 ♗c4 ♕b6

For 6...♗d7 see Game 13. By putting immediate pressure on the centre, Black forces the knight to a passive post.

7 ♘de2

For 7 ♘b3 see Game 58, note to

Black's sixth move. No good is 7 ♘db5 a6 8 ♗e3 ♕a5 9 ♘d4 ♘xe4, etc. And 7 ♘xc6!? bxc6 only helps Black strengthen his centre, though after 8 0-0 White has promising tactical chances.

7 ... e6

8 0-0 ♗e7

9 ♗b3 0-0

10 ♔h1

If 10 ♗e3 ♕c7 11 f4 ♘g4!.

10 ... ♘a5

11 ♗g5 ♕c5!

A finesse aimed at provoking 12 ♗e3 ♕c7 after which White's initiative is blunted.

12 f4 b5

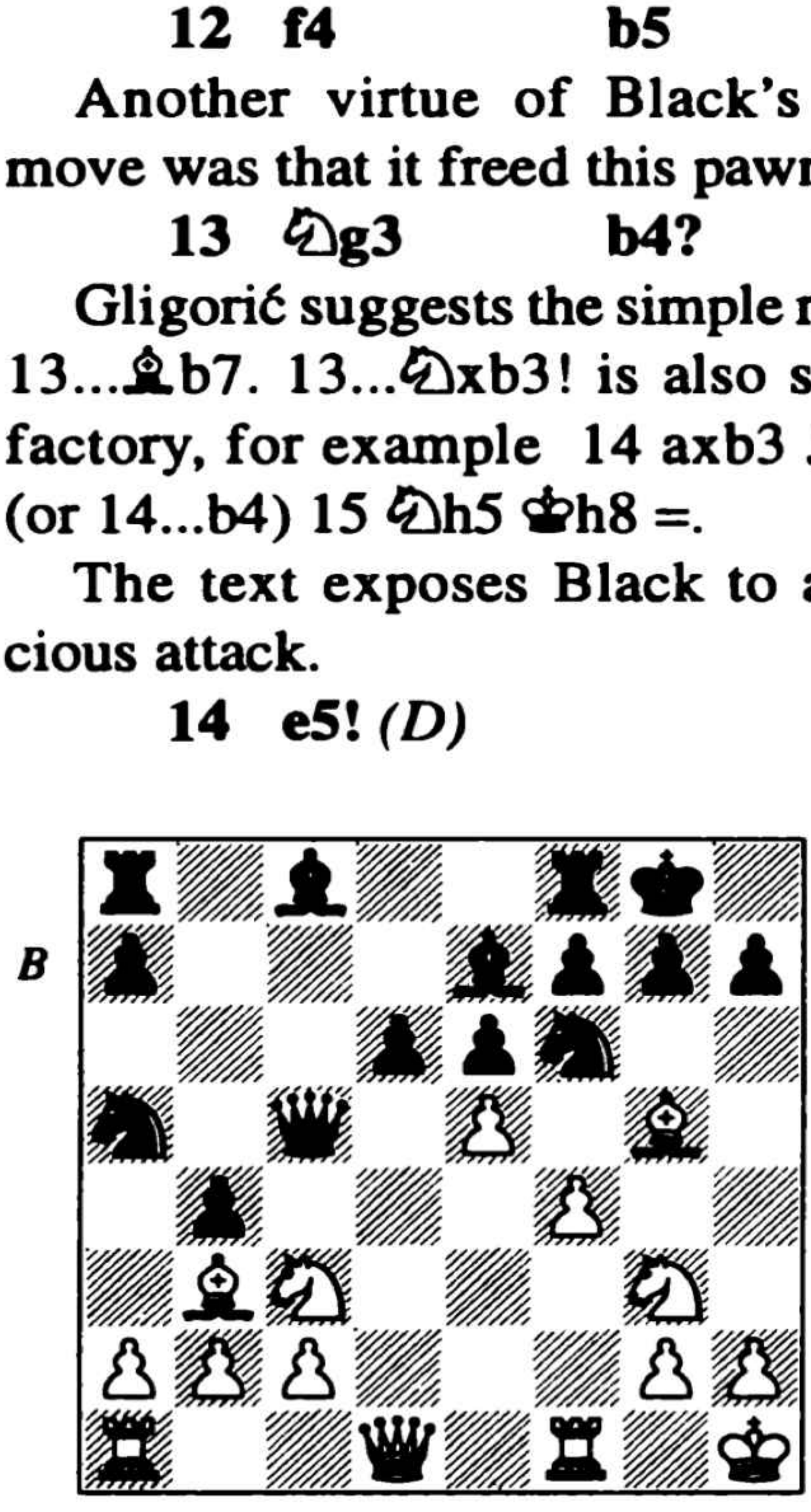
Another virtue of Black's last move was that it freed this pawn.

13 ♘g3 b4?

Gligorić suggests the simple reply 13...♗b7. 13...♘xb3! is also satisfactory, for example 14 axb3 ♗b7 (or 14...b4) 15 ♘h5 ♔h8 =.

The text exposes Black to a vicious attack.

14 e5! *(D)*



14 ... dxe5

a) It's too late now for 14...♘xb3 15 exf6 gxf6 (if 15...♗xf6 16 ♘ce4) 16 ♗h6, etc.

b) 14...bxc3 15 exf6 ♗xf6 (if 15...gxf6, 16 ♗h6 f5 17 ♘h5 threatening to bring the queen to g3) 16 ♗xf6 gxf6 17 ♘e4! ♕f5 18 ♘xd6 ♕g6 19 ♖f3 with a decisive attack (Udović). If now 19...♔h8, 20 ♖g3 ♕h6 21 ♕g4 (threatening ♕g8+!) 21...♕g6 22 ♕h4.

15 ♗xf6 gxf6

a) On 15...♗xf6, 16 ♘ce4 ♕e7 (if 16...♕d4, then 17 ♘xf6+ gxf6 18 ♕g4+ ♔h8 19 ♖ad1 ♕xb2 20 ♘h5 ♖g8 21 ♕xg8+! ♔xg8 22 ♖d8 mate) 17 ♘h5! ♔h8 (if 17...♗h4, 18 fxe5 followed by ♕g4—Gligorić) 18 ♘exf6 gxf6 19 fxe5 fxe5 20 ♘f6 threatening ♕h5 and wins.

b) The best chance is 15...bxc3! 16 ♘e4 ♕b4 17 ♕g4 ♗xf6 18 ♘xf6+ ♔h8 19 ♕h4 h6 20 ♘g4 threatening ♘xh6 with a strong attack.

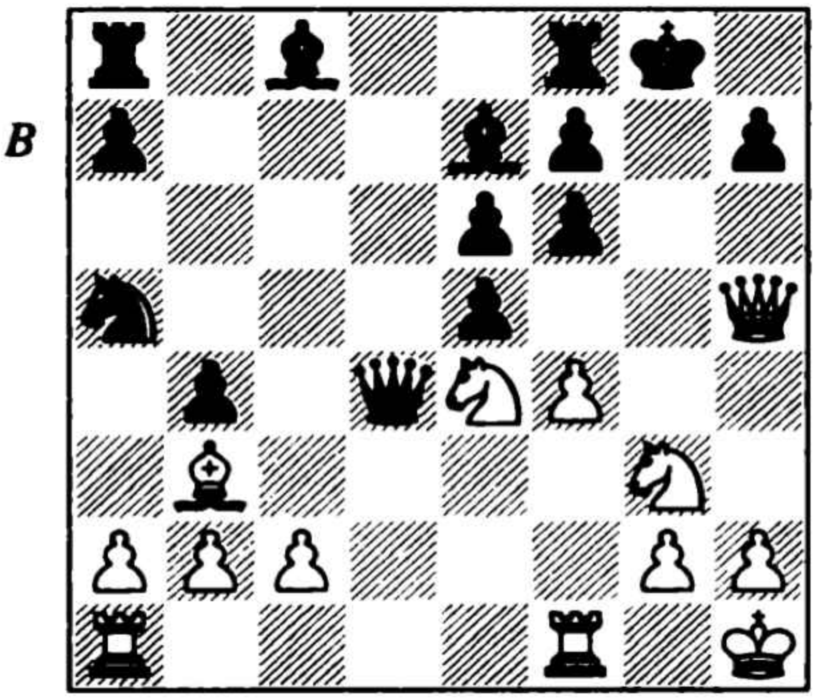
16 ♘ce4 ♕d4

Benko gave this move a lot of thought. On the alternative 16...♕c7, 17 ♘h5! (Black holds after 17 ♕g4+ ♔h8 18 ♕h4 ♖g8 19 ♘xf6. ♖g7 20 ♕h6 ♗b7!) 17...f5 18 ♘hf6+! ♔g7 19 ♕h5! ♗xf6 (not 19...h6 20 ♖f3 ♖h8 [20...exf4 21 ♖h3 ♖h8 22 ♘e8+!] 21 ♖g3+ ♔f8 22 ♕xh6+!) 20 ♘xf6 h6 (if 20...♖h8, 21 ♕g5+ ♔f8 22 ♕h6+ ♔e7 23 ♕h4 ♔f8 24 ♘xh7+ wins the exchange) 21 ♖f3!

♖h8 (not 21...♔xf6 22 ♕h4+ ♔g7 23 ♖g3+ ♔h7 24 ♖h3, winning) 22 ♘e8+! ♖xe8 23 ♖g3+ ♔f8 24 ♕xh6+ ♔e7 25 ♕h4+ ♔d6 (if 25...♔f8, 26 ♖h3! ♕d8 27 ♕h6+ ♔e7 28 ♕g5+ wins the queen) 26 ♖d3+ ♔c6 (if 26...♔c5, 27 ♗a4! threatens ♕f2+) 27 ♗a4+ ♔b7 28 ♗xe8 wins material.

17 ♕h5! *(D)*

Already Black is without a satisfactory defence.



17 ... ♘xb3

a) Or 17...♔h8, 18 ♕h6 ♖g8 (if 18...exf4 19 ♘h5 wins) 19 ♘xf6, etc.

b) 17...exf4 18 ♘f5! exf5 19 ♖xf4 ♕xe4 (otherwise ♖h4) 20 ♖xe4 fxe4 21 ♕xa5 wins. (This key line wouldn't work had Black interpolated 13...♘xb3 earlier!)

c) 17...♔g7 (Lombardy) 18 ♖ad1 ♕xb2 19 ♕h4 ♗b7 20 ♘xf6! breaks through.

18 ♕h6! exf4

On 18...f5, 19 c3! is devastating: e.g. 19...bxc3 20 bxc3 ♕moves 21 ♘h5 forces mate.

19 ♘h5 f5
20 ♖ad1! ♕e5
21 ♘ef6+ ♗xf6
22 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6
23 ♕xf6

Now it's skin and bones.

23 ... ♘c5
24 ♕g5+ ♔h8
25 ♕e7! ♗a6
26 ♕xc5 ♗xf1
27 ♖xf1 1-0

Game 12

Gligorić [Yugoslavia] – **Fischer**

Belgrade/Bled/Zagreb Ct 1959

Sicilian Defence

Castling into it

Although not perfect, this is perhaps the most bitterly contested game in this book. Fischer chooses a difficult variation that requires Olympian judgement. He submits his king to an attack, which, on the face of it, can only be described as irresistible. Why did he do it? Because, we are told, it was strategically justified.

Gligorić, too, must be given equal credit for his courage and restraint. His continuation, despite intensive post-mortem analysis, has yet to be improved upon. The complexity of each phase of this tumultuous struggle must be studied to be believed. Curiously, in the 'barren' rook and pawn ending, Gligorić somehow missed a win—a fact of which he is probably unaware to this day.

1 e4 c5

2 ♘f3 d6

3 d4 cxd4

4 ♘xd4 ♘f6

5 ♘c3 a6

6 ♗g5 e6

7 f4 ♗e7

8 ♕f3 ♕c7

9 0-0-0 ♘bd7

10 g4 b5

Gligorić and I have a standing feud with this position, which we've reached no less than three times. I've lost twice and drawn once (this one).

11 ♗xf6

Interesting is 11 ♗g2 ♗b7 12 ♖he1 b4 13 ♘d5!? exd5 14 exd5 ♔f8 15 ♘f5 ♖e8 and Black won in Bernstein-Fischer, US Ch 1957/8.

11 ... gxf6!?

For 11...♘xf6 see Game 9.

12 f5

Giving up e5 in order to exert pressure on e6. Our game at Zurich 1959 continued 12 ♗g2 ♗b7 13 ♖he1 0-0-0 14 a3 ♘b6 =.

In the US Ch 1959/60, Mednis played 12 a3 against me. The game went 12...♗b7 (12...♖b8 is sharper) 13 f5 e5 14 ♘de2 ♘b6 15 ♘d5 ♗xd5 16 exd5 ♖c8 17 ♘c3 ♘c4 18 ♗xc4 bxc4 19 ♔b1 ♖b8 20 ♔a2 with a better game for White.

12 ♗d3 ♗b7 13 ♔b1 ♘c5 14 f5 b4 15 ♘ce2 d5 16 fxe6 dxe4 17 exf7+ ♔f8 18 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 19 ♕xe4 ♘xe4 20 ♘e6+ ♔xf7 21 ♘xc7 ♖a7 is exciting but equal; Padevsky-Evans, Havana OL 1966.

12 ... ♘e5

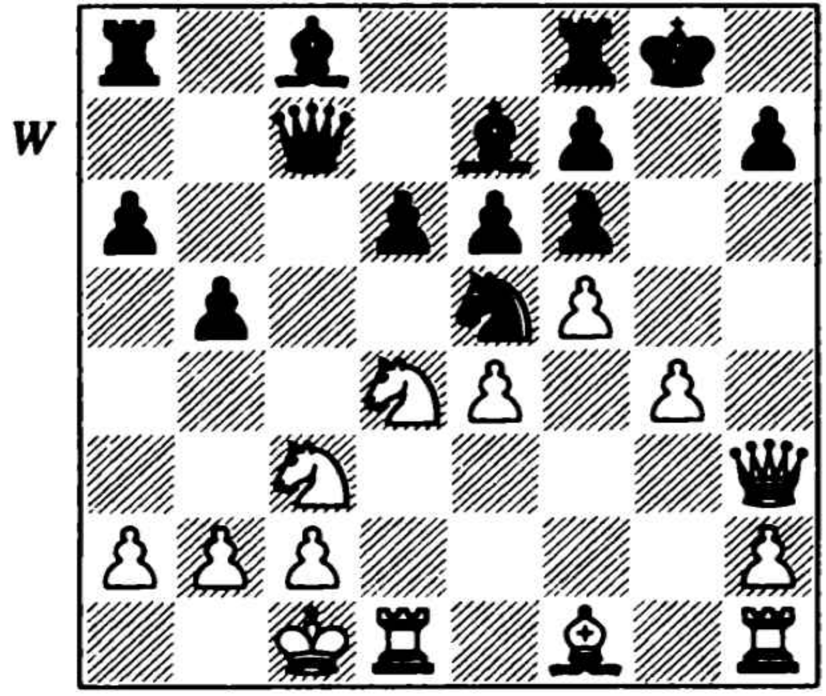
Simagin gave this a '?' and proceeded to analyse the alternative 12...b4 13 fxe6 bxc3 (if 13...♘e5 14 ♘d5!) 14 exd7+ ♗xd7 15 e5, etc. By this logic, the whole variation is unsound for Black. We shall see.

13 ♕h3 0-0! *(D)*

Not 13...♗d7 14 g5! fxg5 (if 14...exf5, 15 ♘d5) 15 fxe6 fxe6 16 ♘xe6 and Black's game collapses.

Petrosian and Tal both happened to stroll by the board at this instant. Petrosian made a wry face, which looked to me like 'Can Black do this and live?'

Black's 'ugly' defence is based on sound positional considerations; once he can consolidate, there is a strong potential in the two bishops coupled with his beautifully posted



knight and compact pawn mass. These assets, in the long run, hopefully, should outweigh the temporary weakness of his king and the immobile target on e6.

14 ♘ce2!

The consistent strategic plan. Gligorić intends ♘f4, bringing additional pressure to bear on e6. Simagin gave the offhand 14 ♕h6 ♔h8 15 g5! and 'wins'. It is incredibly naïve to imagine that a player of Gligorić's calibre could overlook such a simple refutation. In this line simply 15...♖g8! refutes White's strategy 16 g6 (if 16 gxf6 ♘g4 regains the pawn with advantage) 16...fxg6 17 ♘xe6 (weaker is 17 fxe6 ♗b7) 17...♗xe6 18 fxe6 ♖ac8 19 ♕d2 (19 a3 d5! 20 exd5 ♗xa3) 19...♘c4 20 ♗xc4 (20 ♕d4 ♕a5) 20...♕xc4 21 ♕d5 ♖ge8 threatening ...♗f8 (or ...b4).

In a sense my judgement was vindicated when Bronstein (as Black) reached the diagram against Kholmov in the 1964 USSR Ch. The continuation was 14 g5!? b4? (Kholmov gives as the best defence: '14...fxg5! 15 fxe6 fxe6 16 ♘xe6 ♕d7 17 ♘d5 ♕xe6 18 ♕xe6+ ♗xe6 19 ♘xe7+ ♔f7 20 ♘f5 =') 15 gxf6 ♗xf6 16 ♖g1+ ♔h8 17 ♕h6 ♕e7 18 ♘c6!! ♘xc6 19 e5!! and White won brilliantly.

14 ... ♔h8

14...♕b7 also comes into serious consideration.

Unsound is 14...♗d7 15 ♘f4 ♕c8 16 ♕h6 ♔h8 17 ♘h5 ♖g8 18 ♘xf6 ♖g7 19 ♗e2 ♕d8 20 g5, etc.

15 ♘f4 ♖g8

16 ♖g1

Gligorić gives 16 ♗e2 as correct. After 16...♕b7 17 fxe6 fxe6 it's anybody's game, whilst 16 fxe6 fxe6 17 ♘dxe6 ♗xe6 (Black may also try 17...♕a5 or 17...♕b7) 18 ♘xe6 ♕c8 leads to an equal position.

16 ... d5!

Suddenly the game opens up! But more prudent is 16...♕b7, e.g. 17 ♖e1 ♕b6!.

17 fxe6

Weak is 17 exd5? exf5! and White can't recapture because of the pin on the g-file.

17 ... dxe4

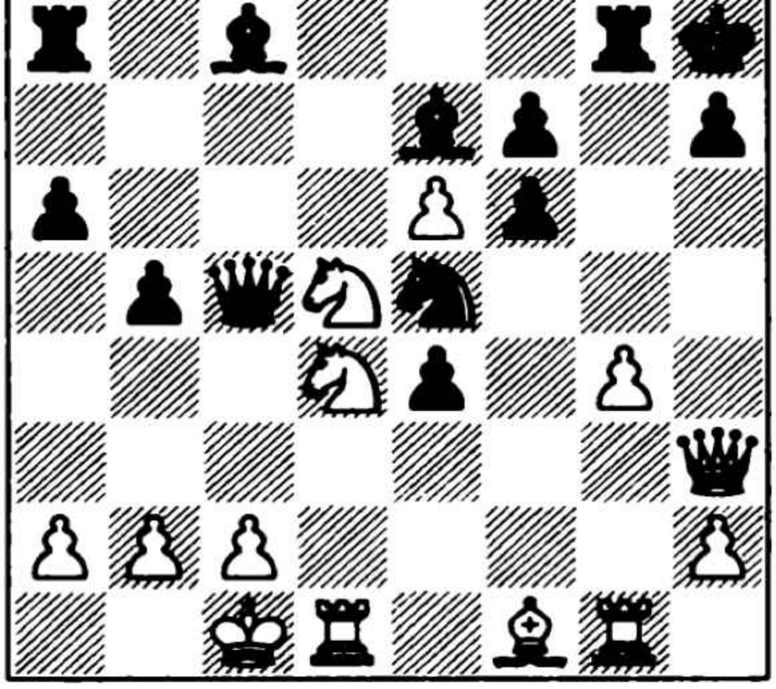
18 ♘d5 ♕c5 *(D)*

Black's game hangs by a hair. 19 exf7 ♘xf7 20 ♘xe7 ♕xe7 is roughly even.

19 ♘xe7

Weird complications result from the key line 19 ♘f5!:

W



a) 19...♗d8 20 ♕h6! (not 20 ♖g3 fxe6 or 20 e7 ♗xf5 21 exd8♕ ♖axd8) 20...♖g6 21 ♘f4! ♘d3+ 22 ♖xd3! wins.

b) 19...♕xg1 20 ♘fxe7 ♗xe6 (if 20...♕xg4 21 ♕xg4 ♖xg4 22 ♘c7 ♖b8 23 ♖d8+ ♔g7 24 ♘f5+ ♔g6 25 e7 wins) 21 ♘xg8 (if 21 ♘xf6 ♖g7) 21...♗xg4 22 ♕h6 ♗xd1 23 ♘gxf6 ♕g6 24 ♕xg6 hxg6 25 ♔xd1 with winning chances.

19 ... ♕xe7

20 ♘f5

After 20 ♕e3 ♗b7 21 exf7 ♕xf7, Black wins a pawn.

20 ... ♕xe6

21 ♕h6

Possibly Gligorić had originally intended 21 ♖d6? ♕xa2 22 ♕h6, overlooking that Black can win with 22...♕a1+ (if 22...♗xf5, 23 ♕xf6+ ♖g7 24 ♖d8+ leads to a draw by perpetual) 23 ♔d2 ♘f3+ 24 ♔e3 (24 ♔e2?? ♕e1 mate; or 24 ♔c3? ♕a5+ 25 ♔b3 ♕a4+ 26 ♔c3 b4+ 27 ♔c4 ♗e6+ mates) 24...♕xb2! wins.

21 ... ♗d7!

Defending against the powerful threat of ♖d8! Not 21...♘xg4? 22 ♖xg4! ♖xg4 23 ♖d8+ ♖g8 24 ♕g7 mate.

22 ♖d6

White has no choice. Black threatened ...♖g6 followed by ...♕xa2. 22 ♔b1 is met by 22...♘xg4.

22 ... ♘xg4!

23 ♖xg4

Forced. 23 ♖xe6? ♘xh6 wins a piece.

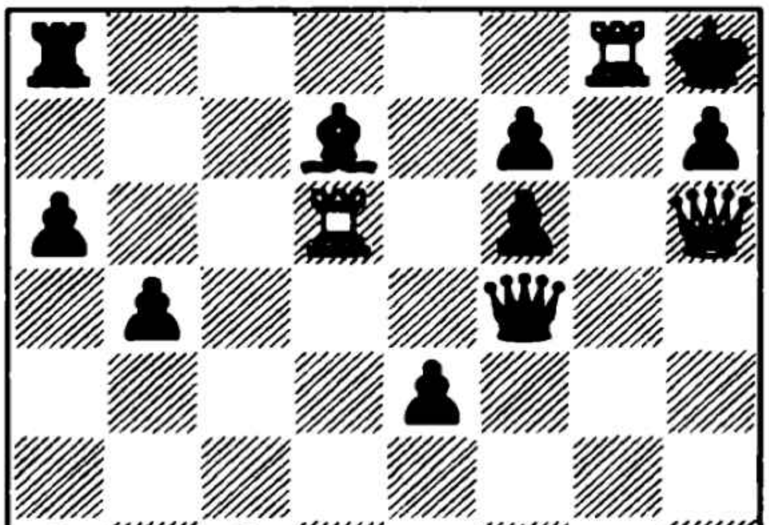
23 ... ♕xf5

24 ♖xg8+? *(D)*

Handing Black the game on a silver platter. Correct is 24 ♖f4 ♕g5 25 ♕xf6+ ♕xf6 26 ♖dxf6 e3! 27 ♖xf7 ♖g1! 28 ♖xd7 e2 29 ♖d1! exd1♕+ 30 ♔xd1 ♔g7 31 ♔e1 ♖f8 32 ♖xf8 ♔xf8 33 ♔f2 with good drawing prospects.

Now Black has two ways to recapture: which one is correct?

B



24 ... ♖xg8?

Returning the compliment! The winning line is 24...♔xg8! 25 ♖xf6

♕e5 with an extra pawn and a dominating position (if 26 ♖xa6? ♖xa6 27 ♕xa6 ♕f4+ wins a piece).

25 ♖xf6 ♕d5
26 ♖d6! ♕f5

On 26...♕b7?, 27 ♕f6+ ♖g7 28 ♕d8+ ♖g8 29 ♕xd7 wins.

27 ♖f6 ♕g5+

I should have contented myself with the draw now by 27...♕d5 28 ♖d6, etc.

28 ♕xg5 ♖xg5
29 ♖xf7 ♗g4
30 ♔d2 ♗f3
31 ♔e3 ♖g1
32 ♗h3

Not 32 ♔f2? ♖h1.

32 ... ♖e1+
33 ♔f4 ♗d1

Playing, as Dr. Tarrasch wryly put it, 'for the loss'. Nowadays I would know better than to try to squeeze a win out of such a simplified ending.

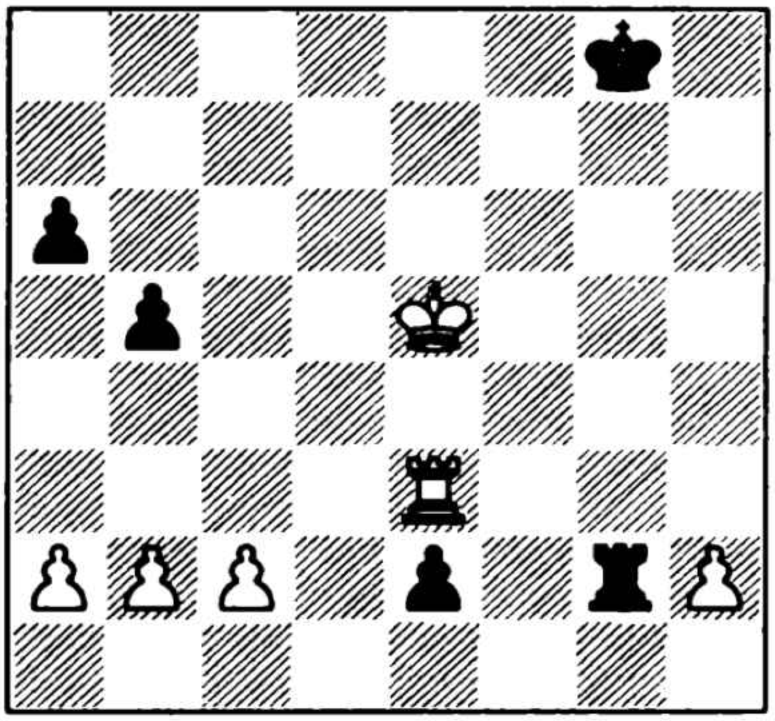
34 ♔e5!

Gligorić is also playing to win—by cashing in on my inexperience. Simply 34 ♖e7 ♗xc2 35 ♗f5 holds the draw. But he is purposely inviting me to overextend myself.

34 ... e3
35 ♗f5 ♖g1
36 ♖xh7+ ♔g8
37 ♖c7 ♗g4?

Still chasing the chimera of the missed win. Black should simply force a draw with 37...e2 38 ♔f6 ♔h8 39 ♖h7+ ♔g8 40 ♖c7 ♔h8, etc.

39 ♖c3 e2
40 ♖e3 ♖g2 *(D)*



In my excitement I had originally intended 40...♖g7?, overlooking the simple reply 41 ♔d4 (among others). Fortunately, Black can still hold the draw.

41 ♔d4 e1♕!

After 41...♖xh2? 42 ♔d3 Black is really lost!

42 ♖xe1 ♖xc2
43 ♖b1 ♔f7!

Not 43...♖xh2? 44 ♔c5 with a fatal penetration on the queenside.

44 a3 ♔e6
45 b3

After 45 h4 ♔d6 Black holds the balance. The threat now is ♖h1.

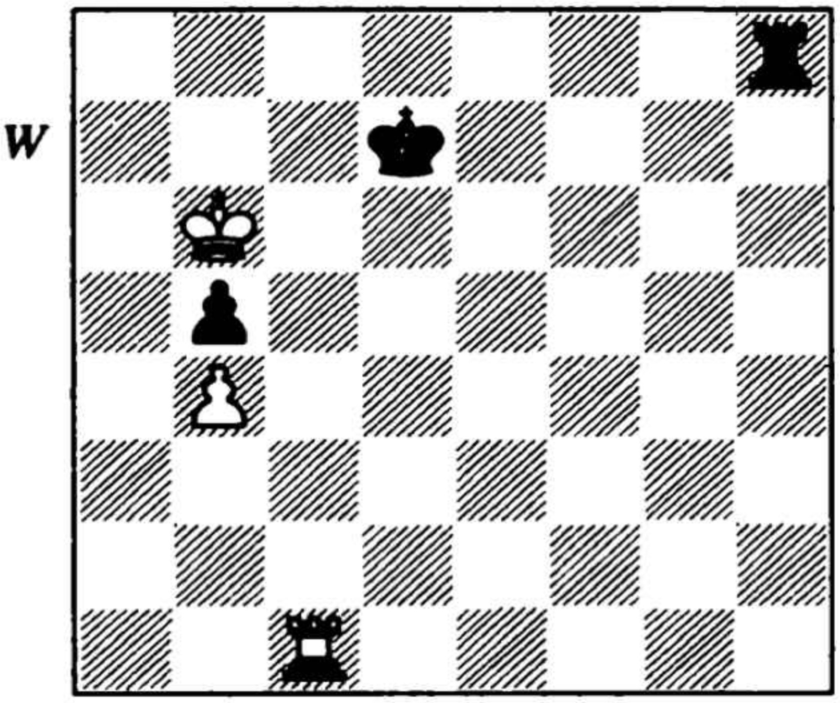
45 ... ♖xh2
46 ♔c5 ♔d7
47 ♔b6 ♖a2
48 ♔xa6 ♖xa3+
49 ♔b7

Trying to finagle. 49 ♔xb5 ♔c7 leads to an easy book draw.

Crisper is 49...b4 50 ♖d1+ (on 50 ♔b6 ♔c8 the Black king gets in front of the pawn) 50...♔e6 51 ♖d3 ♔e5 52 ♔b6 ♔e4 53 ♖h3 ♔d4 54 ♔b5 ♖a8 55 ♔xb4 ♖b8+ 56 ♔a5 ♖a8+ 57 ♔b6 ♖b8+ 58 ♔c6 (if 58 ♔a6 ♔c5 =) 58...♖b4 59 ♖g3 ♖b8 with an impenetrable blockade.

50 ♔b6 ♔d7
51 b4 ♖h3
52 ♖c1 ♖h8? *(D)*

After the game Olafsson scolded me: "How can you play an ending like this so fast?" (I'd only been taking a few seconds a move for the last dozen moves or so.) "Because there's no danger. It's a dead draw", I replied. Had I known then what I know now, I would have selected 52...♖h5 and if 53 ♖c5 ♖xc5 54 ♔xc5 ♔c7 55 ♔xb5 ♔b7 holding the opposition, with a book draw.



53 ♔xb5?

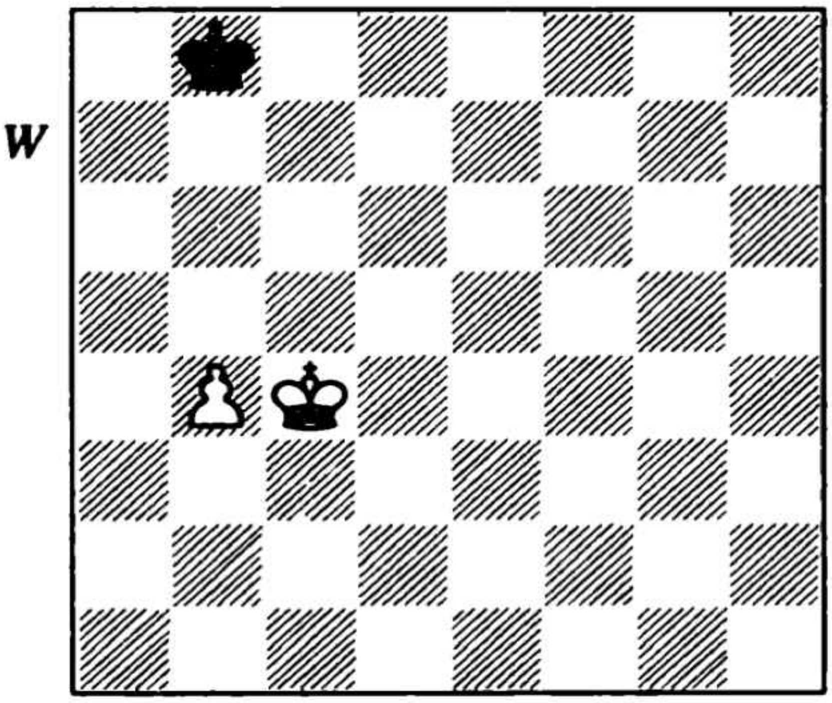
Now it's Gligorić's turn to let me out. As Olafsson showed me, White can win with 53 ♖c7+!. It's hard to believe. I stayed up all night analysing, finally convincing myself and, incidentally, learning a lot about rook and pawn endings in the process. Gligorić failed to point it out in his notes to the Bled tournament book. The main point is Black cannot get his king in front of the pawn.

A sample line is 53 ♖c7+! ♔d6 (if 53...♔d8, 54 ♖c5 ♔d7 55 ♔b7! ♔d6 56 ♖xb5) 54 ♖c6+ ♔d7 (54...♔d5 55 ♔xb5 ♖b8+ 56 ♖b6) 55 ♔xb5 ♖b8+ (if 55...♖h4, 56 ♖c1 ♖h8 57 ♔a6) 56 ♖b6 ♖h8 57 ♖b7+ ♔c8 58 ♔a6 ♖h6+ 59 ♔a7 with a book win.

53 ... ♖b8+
54 ♔a4 ♖a8+

The game was adjourned again. But the crisis has passed.

55 ♔b3 ♖c8
56 ♖xc8 ♔xc8
57 ♔c4 ♔b8! *(D)*



½-½

Black holds the 'distant opposition', e.g. 58 ♔c5 (or 58 ♔d5 ♔b7) 58...♔c7 59 ♔b5 ♔b7, etc.

Game 13

Fischer – Gligorić [Yugoslavia]

Belgrade/Bled/Zagreb Ct 1959

Sicilian Defence

Something new

During the mid-fifties, Gligorić, Reshevsky, and Najdorf were considered the strongest non-Soviet Grandmasters. Within a few years Fischer managed to surpass them. However, in so doing, he succeeded in beating Gligorić only once—up to 1966 (see game 56).

On the occasion of this first win, Fischer employs a novel attacking system (13 ♕e2) against the Dragon Variation. Gligorić fails to react vigorously enough and makes the mistake of castling too soon, thereby exposing himself to the same type of sacrificial combination that demolished Larsen in Game 2.

1 e4 c5
2 ♘f3 ♘c6
3 d4 cxd4
4 ♘xd4 ♘f6
5 ♘c3 d6
6 ♗c4 ♗d7

For Benko's 6...♕b6 see Game 11.

Recently in a skittles game someone tried 6...g6!? against me. The game continued: 7 ♘xc6 bxc6 8 e5 ♘h5? (8...♘g4 is correct, but not 8...dxe5?? 9 ♗xf7+ winning the queen—that was another skittles game!) 9 ♕f3! e6 (9...d5 10 ♘xd5!) 10 g4 ♘g7 11 ♘e4 ♕a5+ (11...d5 12 ♘f6+ ♔e7 13 ♕a3+) 12 ♗d2 ♕xe5 13 ♗c3 1-0.

7 ♗b3

7 ♗e3 is met by 7...♘g4!. On 7 ♗g5 e6 8 ♗xf6? ♕xf6 9 ♘db5, Black plays 9...0-0-0 10 ♘xd6+ ♔b8 with a winning attack (Gligorić). Also strong is 7 0-0 g6 8 ♘xc6! ♗xc6 (or 8...bxc6 9 f4) 9 ♗g5 ♗g7 10 ♘d5!.

7 ... g6
8 f3

The only other try for any advantage is 8 ♗e3 ♘g4 9 ♘xc6 bxc6 (9...♘xe3? 10 ♗xf7+!) 10 ♕f3 (not 10 ♗xa7? c5) 10...♘e5 11 ♕g3.

8 ... ♘a5

Releasing the central tension this way is wrong. Correct is 8...♘xd4 9 ♕xd4 ♗g7 but after 10 ♗g5! White still keeps control.

9 ♗g5 ♗g7

10 ♕d2 h6

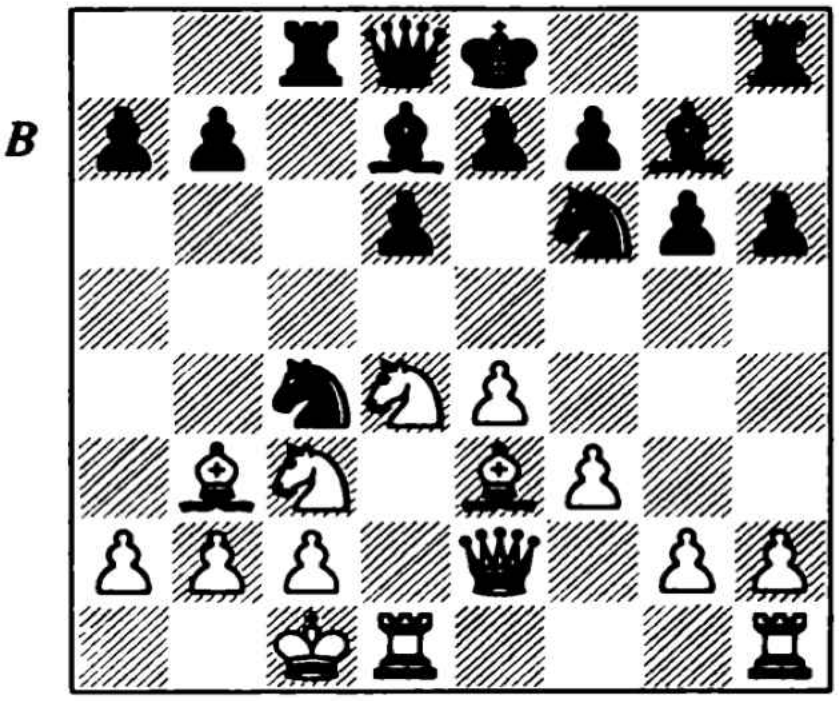
A concession. But on 10...0-0, 11 ♗h6 followed by h4-h5 produces a strong and almost mechanical attack.

11 ♗e3 ♖c8

12 0-0-0 ♘c4

13 ♕e2!? *(D)*

A totally new idea at the time. 13 ♗xc4 ♖xc4 14 g4 was the usual, and good, procedure. The text permits Black to capture what was considered, then, to be the more important of the white bishops.



Bronstein was so impressed with this concept that he enthusiastically gave my thirteenth move '!!' claiming it was virtually the winning line. Alexander Kotov, the commissar of chess criticism in the Soviet Union, wrote, with more sober restraint: 'It is difficult to agree with this.'

13 ... ♘xe3

Not 13...♕c7? 14 ♘db5.

14 ♕xe3 0-0

Reminiscent of Game 12, it is now Gligorić who castles into it! At Mar del Plata 1960, Merini played against me the stronger 14...♕b6 (threatening ...e5) 15 ♕d2 ♕c5 16 f4 h5? (better is 16...b5 or 16...0-0) 17 ♘f3 ♗h6 18 e5! with a powerful attack.

Kotov recommends 14...♕a5 15 ♔b1 (he gives only 15 g4? ♕g5!) 15...♕c5 16 ♕d3 a6 and Black's all right. So best is probably 15 f4 (after 14...♕a5) 15...0-0 16 h3 e6 but Black's two bishops may offset the weakness of the d-pawn.

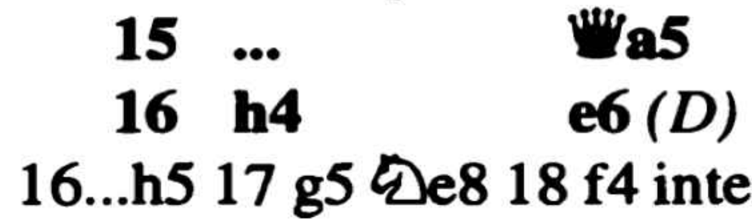
15 g4

Timing is important. On 15 h4, 15...h5 locks it up.

15 ... ♕a5

16 h4 e6 *(D)*

16...h5 17 g5 ♘e8 18 f4 intending f5 gives White a strong game.



17 ♘de2!

Black holds out after 17 g5 hxg5 18 hxg5 ♘h5 19 f4 ♕c5 (threatening ...e5).

17 ... ♖c6

18 g5 hxg5

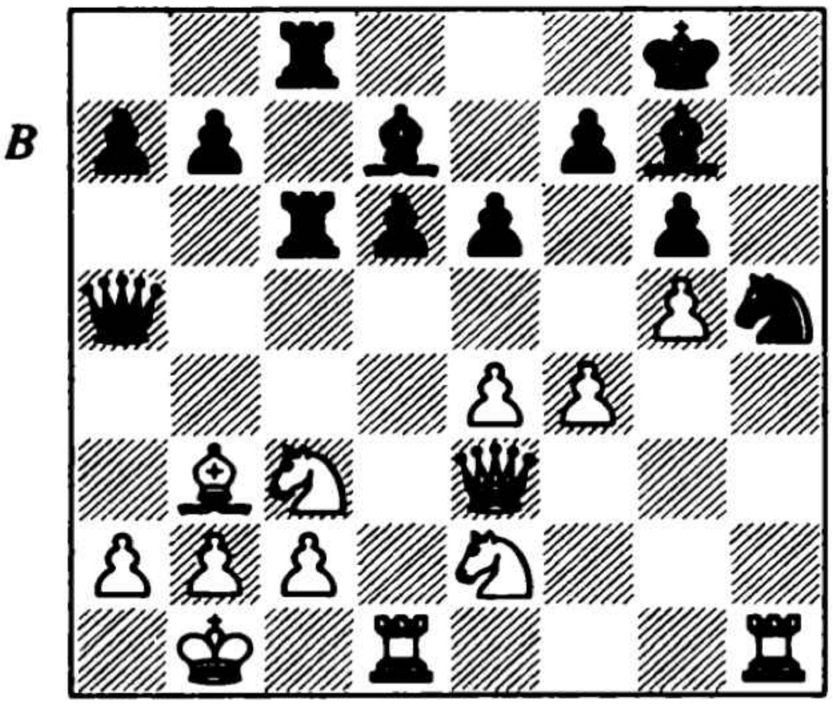
On 18...♘h5, 19 gxh6 ♗f6 20 f4 continues the pawn stampede.

19 hxg5 ♘h5

20 f4 ♖fc8

21 ♔b1 *(D)*

An important preparatory move. The immediate 21 f5!? exf5 22 ♘d5 ♕xa2! gives Black good counterplay.



21 ... ♕b6

22 ♕f3 ♖c5

23 ♕d3!

Several Yugoslav chess journalists scurried toward the analysis room, where Matanović was explaining the game on a demonstration board. Apparently the feeling was that I had just blundered.

The more obvious 23 f5 looks good, but Black still has defensive resources with 23...exf5 24 ♖xh5 (if 24 ♘d5 ♕d8 25 exf5 ♗xf5 26 ♖xh5? ♖xc2! wins for Black) 24...gxh5 25 ♘f4 ♖xc3 26 bxc3 ♖xc3 27 ♕xh5 ♖xb3+ 28 cxb3 ♕e3, etc.

23 ... ♗xc3

The threat against the d-pawn is awkward to meet. On 23...♖5c6, 24 f5! exf5 25 ♖xh5! gxh5 26 exf5 is crushing. Or if 23...♖8c6?, then 24 ♘a4 wins the exchange. Finally on 23...♗f8, 24 f5! exf5 25 ♘d5 ♕d8 (if 25...fxe4, 26 ♕xe4 ♗f5 27 ♕xf5 wins a piece) 26 ♖xh5! gxh5 (or 26...♖xd5 27 ♗xd5 gxh5 28 exf5) 27 ♘f6+ ♔g7 28 ♕h3 releases an avalanche.

24 ♘xc3

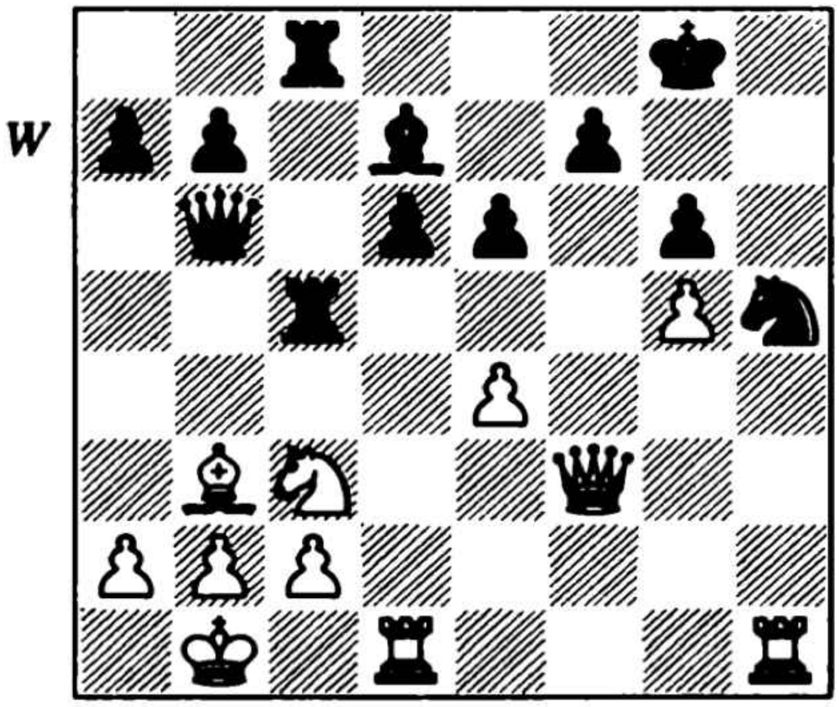
Not 24 bxc3? ♗b5.

24 ... ♘xf4

This is what the crowd thought I had overlooked.

25 ♕f3 ♘h5 *(D)*

On 25...e5, 26 ♘e2! is decisive.



26 ♖xh5!

I've made this sacrifice so often, I feel like applying for a patent!

26 ... gxh5

27 ♕xh5 ♗e8

The best defensive try. On 27...♔f8 there follows 28 ♕h8+

♔e7 29 ♕f6+ ♔e8 30 ♖h1 ♗b5 31 ♗xe6! fxe6 32 ♕xe6+ ♔d8 (or 32...♔f8 33 ♖h8+ ♔g7 34 ♕f6 mate) 33 ♖h8+ ♔c7 34 ♖xc8 mate.

28 ♕h6! ♖xc3

29 bxc3

On 29 ♖h1, 29...♕d4 holds out for a while.

29 ... ♖xc3

White still retains a winning attack after 29...♕e3 30 ♖h1 ♕xc3 31 g6 ♕g7 32 ♕h2! (Bronstein).

30 g6! fxg6

31 ♖h1 ♕d4

32 ♕h7+

Again a mistake! 32 ♗xe6+ mates more quickly.

1-0

Game 14

Keres [USSR] – **Fischer**

Belgrade/Bled/Zagreb Ct 1959

Sicilian Defence

Too many cooks

Professionals spend much of their spare time hunting for 'cooks' with which they hope to surprise future opponents. It was rumoured, for example, that Marshall waited for over ten years before springing his famous gambit on Capablanca at New York, in 1918. But, as it happened, the wily Cuban refuted it over the board!

Keres, in like manner, confronts Fischer with an innovation which the latter, in all innocence, proceeds to destroy. Rather than admit that his surprise queen sacrifice is good for only a draw at best, Keres presses for more, offering material in order to sustain his initiative. Fischer continues to accept everything, but, at the very moment when victory is within his grasp (on move 31), stumbles. Now he must win the game all over again; and he manages to do so, with an assist from Keres, in another twenty-two moves.

1 e4 c5

2 ♘f3 d6

3 d4 cxd4

4 ♘xd4 ♘f6

5 ♘c3 a6

6 ♗g5 e6

7 f4 ♗e7

I've tried the sharp 7...♕b6 on several occasions.

8 ♕f3 ♕c7

8...h6 9 ♗h4 g5!? 10 fxg5 ♘fd7 11 ♘xe6!? fxe6 12 ♕h5+ ♔f8 13

♗b5! ♖h7! (Gligorić-Fischer, Portorož IZ 1958) is now considered a drawish variation!

9 0-0-0 ♘bd7

10 ♗e2

An innovation whose doubtful merit appears on move 13. For 10 ♗d3 see Game 9. For 10 g4 see Games 12 and 15.

10 ... b5

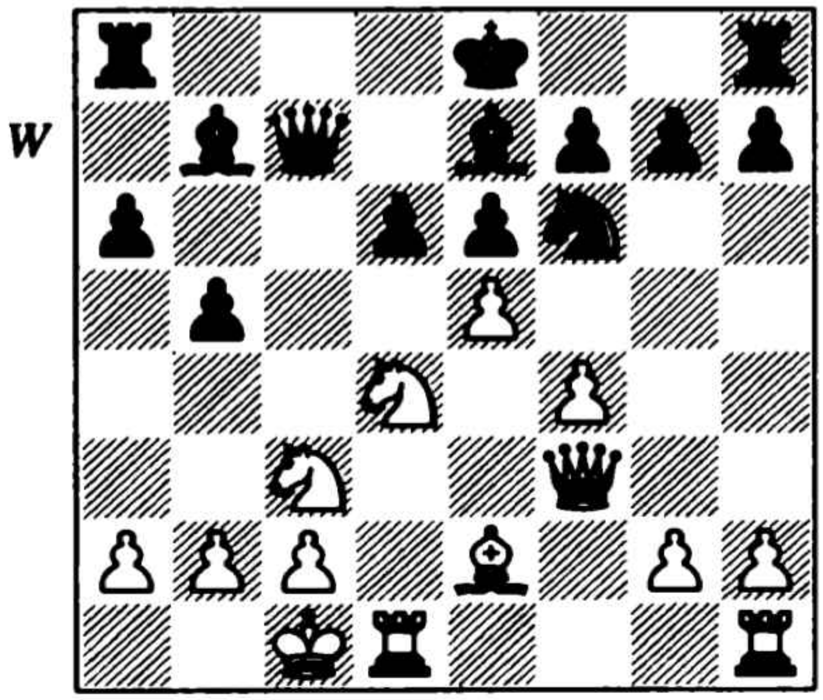
11 ♗xf6 ♘xf6

Not 11...♗xf6? 12 ♗xb5!. Or on 11...gxf6, 12 ♕h5 ♘b6 (if 12...0-0?, 13 ♖d3) 13 a3 followed by f5 is strong.

12 e5!?

12 a3 ♖b8! followed by ...b4 gives Black good counterplay.

12 ... ♗b7 *(D)*



13 exf6!?

The crux of Keres' prepared line. After 13 ♕g3 dxe5 14 fxe5 ♘d7 15 ♕xg7 ♕xe5 Black stands better.

13 ... ♗xf3

So I chopped it off!

14 ♗xf3 ♗xf6

Not 14...♖c8? 15 fxe7 ♕xe7 16 ♘f5! (Bondarevsky).

15 ♗xa8 d5

So far, so forced. Now ...0-0 is threatened.

16 ♗xd5

On 16 ♗c6+ ♔f8 17 ♘ce2 ♔e7 followed by ...♖c8.

16 ... ♗xd4

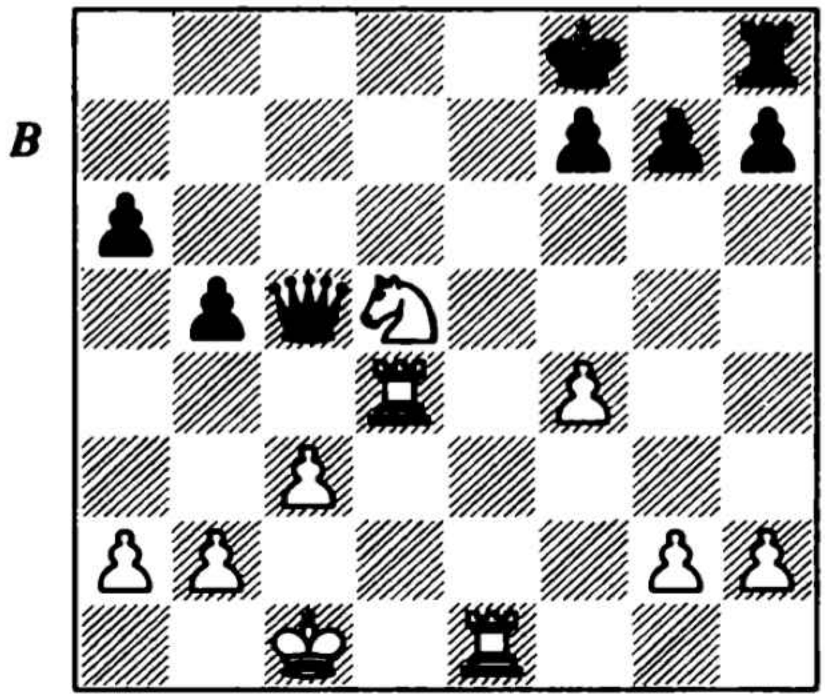
Not 16...♕xf4+ 17 ♔b1 ♗xd4 18 ♗c6+! ♔e7 19 ♘e2, etc. Larsen suggested 16...b4 17 ♗c6+ ♔e7 18 ♘ce2 ♖d8, but 19 ♖d2! (19 g3? ♕b6!) 19...♗xd4 20 ♘xd4 ♕xf4 21 ♘b3 holds for the time being.

17 ♖xd4 exd5

18 ♘xd5 ♕c5

19 ♖e1+ ♔f8

20 c3 *(D)*



White seems to have fair prospects. But a queen is a queen!

20 ... h5!

A hard move to find—even somewhat risky—over the board. Probably Keres had expected 20...g6 21 g4 ♔g7 22 g5 h6 (if 22...♖d8, 23

♘f6 ♖xd4 24 ♖e8 ♖d8! 25 ♖xd8 ♕e3+ draws) 23 h4 hxg5 24 fxg5 ♖d8 25 ♘f6 ♖xd4 26 ♖e8 ♖d8! 27 ♖xd8 ♕e3+ with a draw by perpetual check.

21 f5

To hinder ...g6.

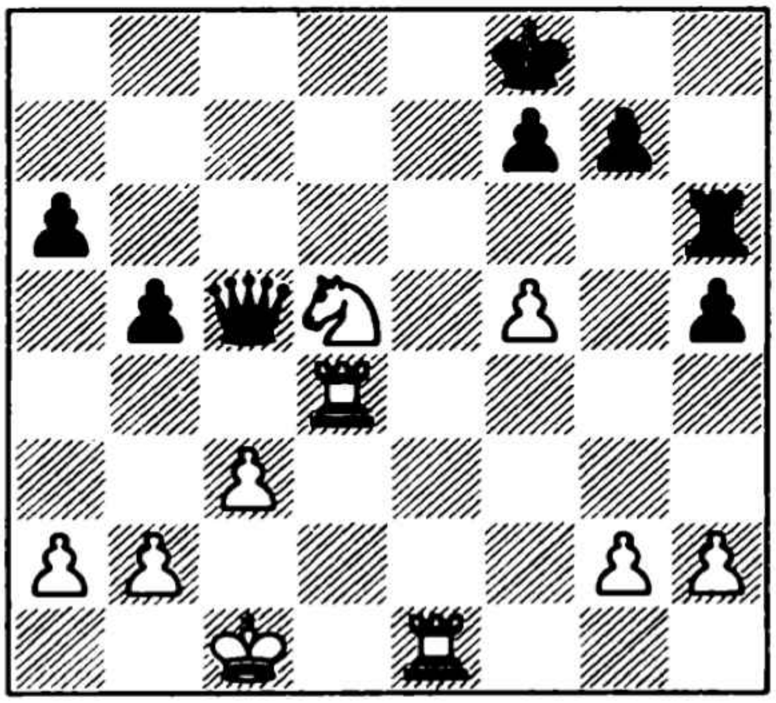
Kotov gives 21 ♘b4 ♕c8? (simply 21...g6 is more than sufficient; e.g. 22 ♘xa6 ♕c6) 22 ♘c6! and wins.

Zagoriansky also mistakenly believes that White has all the chances.

He gives '21 ♖e5! g6 (more passive is 21...♕c8 22 ♘e7 ♕a8 23 ♘c6 f6 24 ♖e6 ♔f7 25 f5) 22 f5!' but 22...♔g7 23 f6+ ♔h6 (24 g4 b4!) is quite satisfactory for Black.

21 ... ♖h6! *(D)*

The key to Black's defence: now the rook sneaks into play via the side exit.



22 f6?

Throwing away a pawn in an attempt to keep Black bottled up. Keres should just try to maintain the status quo with 22 ♖ed1 although Black retains some slight winning chances. But he seems to labour under the delusion that White has the initiative.

22 ♖de4 ♔g8 23 ♖e8+ ♔h7 24 ♖d8 ♖d6 neutralises all White's threats.

22 ... gxf6

23 ♘f4 h4

24 ♖d8+?

Continuing the 'attack'. The defensive 24 ♖e2 was in order.

24 ... ♔g7

25 ♖ee8 ♕g1+

26 ♔d2 ♕f2+

27 ♘e2 ♖g6

28 g3

28 ♖g8+ ♔h6 29 ♖h8+ ♔g5 gets White nowhere.

28 ... f5

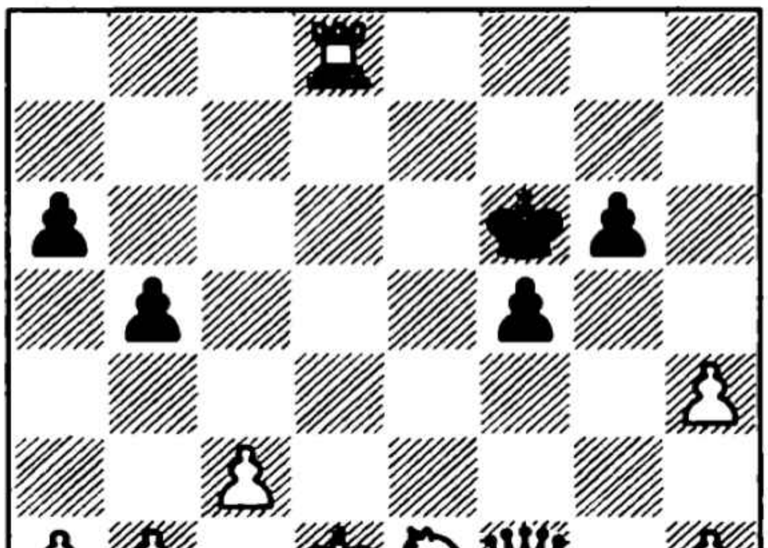
29 ♖g8+ ♔f6

30 ♖xg6+

On 30 ♖d6+ ♔e7 31 ♖dxg6 fxg6 32 ♖xg6 h3 wins (Zagoriansky).

30 ... fxg6

31 gxh4 *(D)*



The winning plan is 31...♕xh4! 32 ♖d6+ ♔f7 33 h3 ♕h6+! (if 33...♕xh3, 34 ♖xg6! ♔xg6?? 35 ♘f4+) 34 ♔d1 (if 34 ♔e1 ♕xh3 35 ♖xg6 ♕h4+! 36 ♖g3 f4 wins; or on 34 ♔c2 ♕xh3 35 ♖xg6 ♕h2 wins) 34...♕xh3 35 ♖xg6 ♕f1+ followed by ...♔xg6.

32 ♖d4!

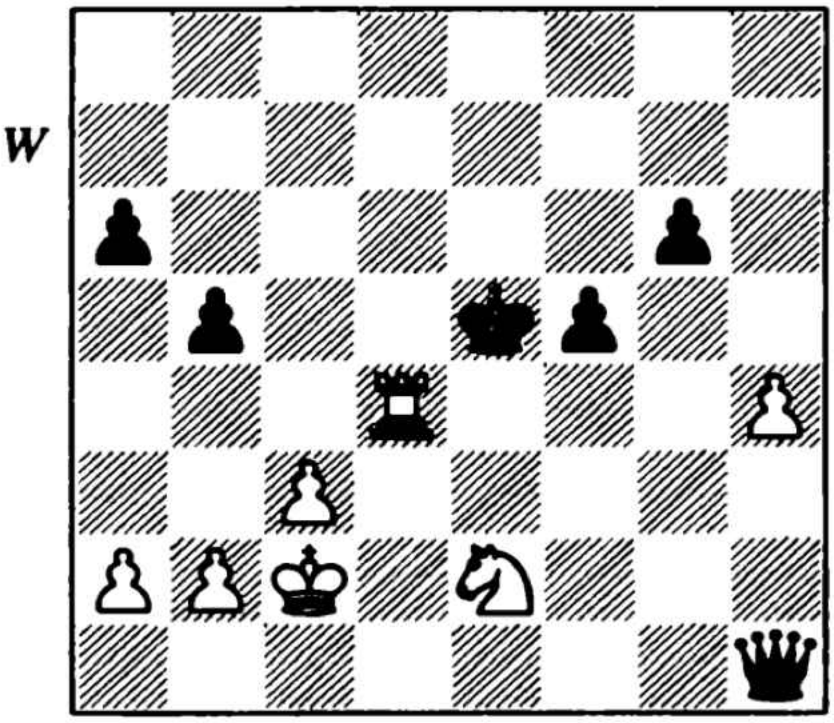
Now Black has to win the game over again.

32 ... ♕h1

33 ♔c2

33 ♘f4? allows penetration with 33...♕b1.

33 ... ♔e5 *(D)*



34 a4

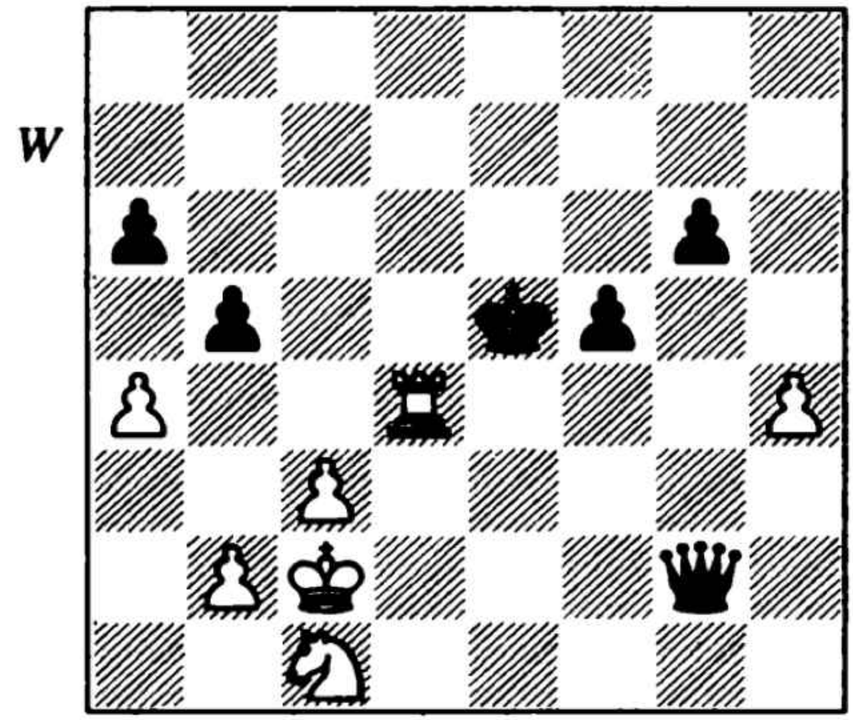
An even tighter defence is 34 ♘c1! followed by ♘d3+ with a probable draw. But not 34 ♘f4? ♕h2+! 35 ♔d1 ♕xf4! 36 ♖xf4 ♔xf4 with a won king and pawn ending: e.g., 37 ♔e2 (if 37 b3 ♔e3!) 36...♔g3 37 b3 ♔xh4 38 c4 bxc4 39 bxc4 ♔g5 and the king is 'in the square'.

Trying to capitalise on the disjointed state of White's minor pieces.

35 ♘c1

Forced. Not 35 ♔d2? ♕a1! 36 ♔c2 bxa4, etc.

35 ... ♕g2+ *(D)*



36 ♔b3?

In time-pressure, Keres creates new losing chances for himself. Also bad is 36 ♔b1 bxa4 37 ♖xa4 ♕f1 38 ♔c2 ♔f6! followed by ...f4 (if 39 ♘d3? ♕e2+).

The right defence is 36 ♔d1! bxa4 (not 36...♕xb2?? 37 ♘d3+) 37 ♘d3+ ♔f6 38 ♖xa4 a5 39 ♖d4 (not 39 ♖xa5? ♕g4+ and ...♕xh4) and Black can't make any headway.

36 ... bxa4+

37 ♔a3

On 37 ♖xa4 (if 37 ♔xa4 ♕c2+ 38 ♘b3 ♕xb2), 37...♕d2! 38 ♘a2 f4 is deadly.

37 ... ♕c2

38 ♘d3+ ♔f6

39 ♘c5 ♕c1!

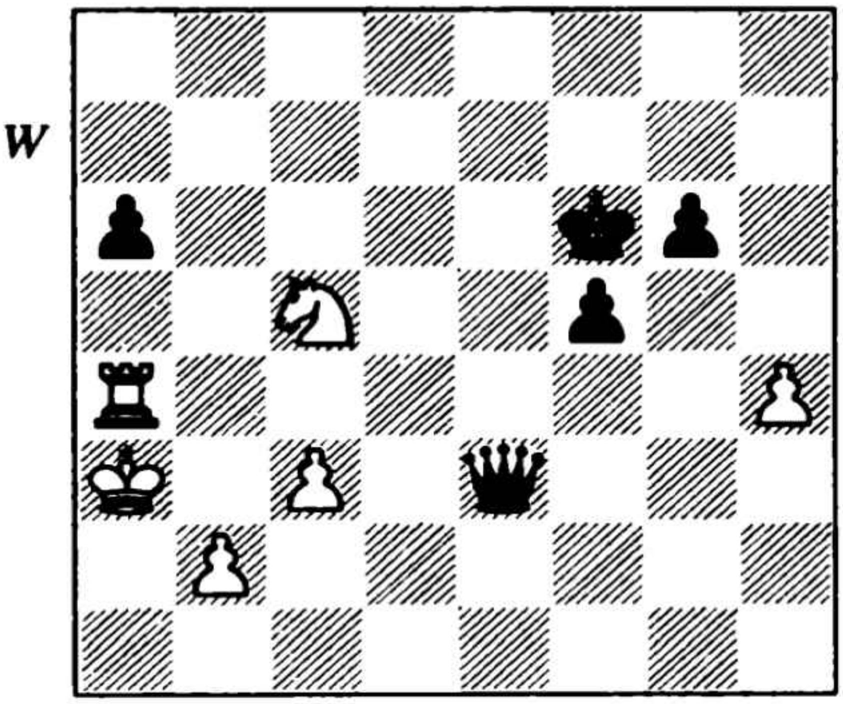
Threatening ...♕a1+.

40 ♖xa4

40 ♘xa4 f4 41 ♘c5 f3 42 ♘d3 ♕e3 transposes into the note after White's 41st move.

40 ... ♕e3 *(D)*

The game was adjourned and Keres sealed his move.



41 ♘xa6?

This makes it easy.

I had expected 41 ♖d4 f4 42 ♘d3 f3. The win is hard, but eventually Black breaks through on a3. For example, 42 ♔b3 (42 b4? f2 wins) 42...♔g7 43 ♔a3 ♕e2 44 ♔b3 ♕d1+ 45 ♔c4 (if 45 ♔a3 a5 46 ♔a2 a4 47 ♘f2 ♕b3+ 48 ♔a1 a3 etc.) 45...a5 46 ♔b5 a4 47 ♔a5 ♕b3 48 ♔a6 a3 49 bxa3 ♕xa3+ 50 ♔b5 ♕xc3, etc. Maybe White can improve, but Black should win because the blockade is not airtight.

41 ... f4

42 ♖d4 ♔f5!

The move Keres missed when he sealed his forty-first move. He had probably anticipated 42...f3 43 ♘c5 f2 44 ♘e4+ ♕xe4 45 ♖xe4 f1♕ with a dead draw since Black can't create another passed pawn.

43 ♘b4

More resistance could have been offered by 43 ♘c5 but it's still lost after 43...♕e7! 44 b4 ♕xh4 45 b5 ♕f6 etc.

43 ... ♕e7!

This temporary pin is decisive. Black wins the h-pawn and his two passed pawns become irresistible.

44 ♔b3 ♕xh4

45 ♘d3 g5

46 c4 ♕g3

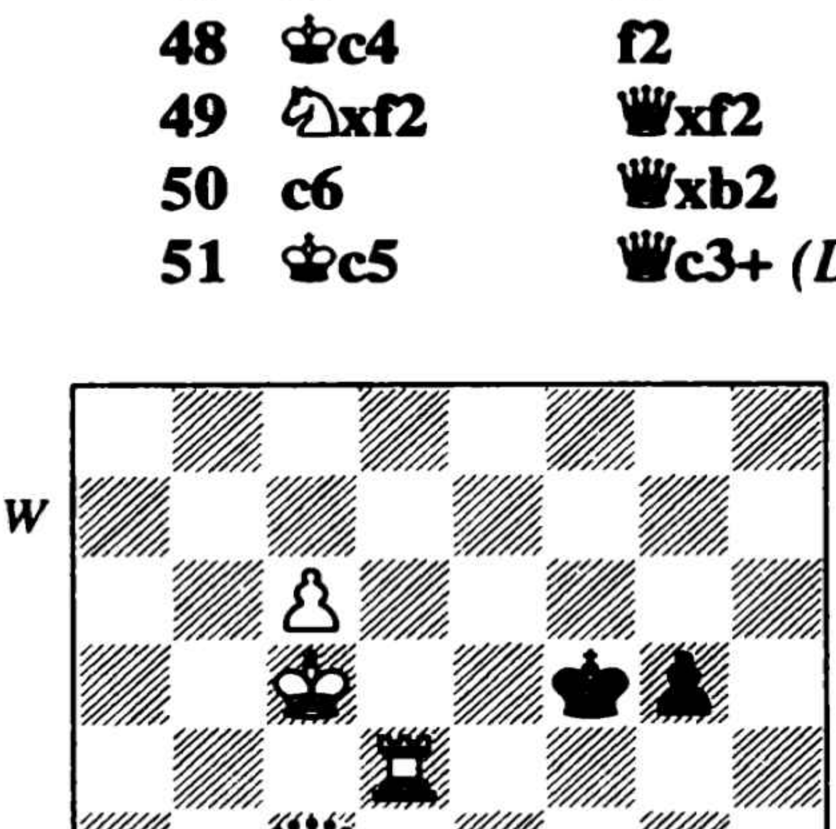
47 c5 f3

48 ♔c4 f2

49 ♘xf2 ♕xf2

50 c6 ♕xb2

51 ♔c5 ♕c3+ *(D)*



52 ♔d5

On 52 ♖c4 ♕a5+ 53 ♔d4 ♕c7 wins.

52 ... g4

53 ♖c4 ♕e5 mate

Smyslov [USSR] – **Fischer**

Belgrade/Bled/Zagreb Ct 1959

Sicilian Defence

A whopper

Here is Fischer's first win against Vassily Smyslov; and it is hard to recall when the former world champion, conducting White, has been so badly outplayed.

On move 13 of a crucial opening variation, Smyslov makes what appears to be a 'lapsus manus'. Rather than fight a prolonged uphill positional battle, he sacrifices a pawn to try to regain the initiative. This proves to be a piece of bad judgement, since, basically, the loss of this pawn alone brings about his demise. Defending with deadly precision, Fischer gradually consolidates—the shadow of his pawn looming larger with each approach to the endgame. Smyslov thrashes about, striving desperately for complications, avoiding exchanges like the plague. But he is unable to get off the hook.

1 e4 c5
2 ♘f3 d6
3 d4 cxd4
4 ♘xd4 ♘f6
5 ♘c3 a6
6 ♗g5

For 6 ♗e2 see Games 4 and 42. For 6 ♗c4 see Games 17, 55 and 58.

6 ... e6
7 f4 ♗e7
8 ♕f3 ♕c7
9 0-0-0 ♘bd7

Weak is 9...h6 10 ♗h4 ♘bd7 11 ♗d3 b5 12 e5! ♗b7 13 ♘xe6! fxe6 14 ♗g6+ ♔f8 15 exf6 ♗xf3 (better is 15...♘xf6) 16 fxe7+ ♔g8 17 gxf3 ♘f6 18 ♗xf6 gxf6 19 e8♕+ ♖xe8 20 ♗xe8 d5 (Gligorić-Bobotsov, Hastings 1959/60) 21 f5! (*MCO*) wins.

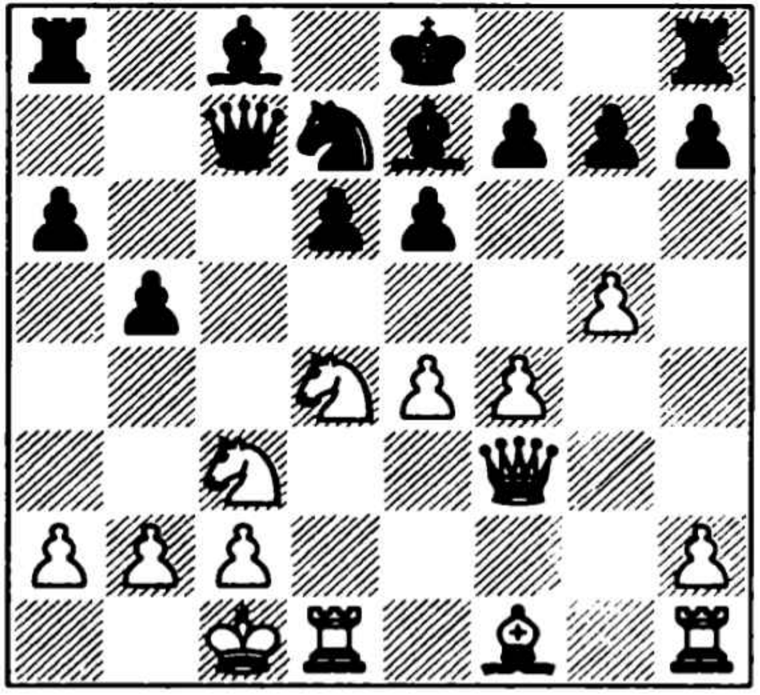
10 g4 b5
11 ♗xf6 ♘xf6

For 11...gxf6 see Game 12.

12 g5 ♘d7 *(D)*
13 ♗h3?

Innovation or omission? In either case, after this move White throws away his theoretical advantage and even loses the initiative. Necessary is 13 a3 ♗b7 (13...♖b8! is in vogue) and now there are two main variations:

W



a) 14 h4 d5 15 exd5 ♘b6 16 f5 ♘xd5 17 fxe6 0-0-0 18 ♗g2 ♘xc3 19 ♕xb7+ ♕xb7 20 ♗xb7+ ♔xb7 21 bxc3 ♗xa3+ 22 ♔b1 fxe6 23 ♘xe6 ♖c8 24 ♖h3 g6 25 c4 ♖he8 and shortly drawn; Sherwin-Fischer, US Ch 1959/60.

b) 14 ♗h3 0-0-0 15 f5!? (interesting is 15 ♗xe6!? fxe6 16 ♘xe6 ♕c4 [Keres recommends 16...♕b6] 17 ♘d5 with unclear complications, though White won in Tal-Gligorić, Moscow 1963) 15...♗xg5+ 16 ♔b1 e5 17 ♘dxb5 axb5 18 ♘xb5 ♕b6! (better than 18...♕c5 which I played against Gligorić at the Candidates' 1959) 19 ♘xd6+ ♔c7 20 ♘xf7 ♗f6 is roughly equal.

13 ... b4!

My game with Walther (9) had taught me this lesson well.

14 ♘ce2 ♗b7

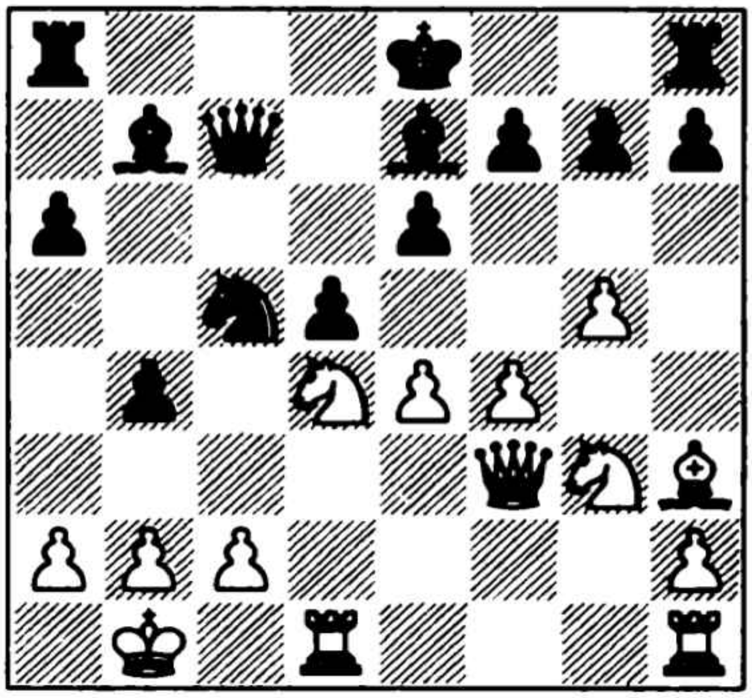
15 ♔b1?

In this sharp variation, White has no time for such amenities. 15 ♘g3 avoids incurring any severe disadvantage, while the speculative 15 ♗xe6!? fxe6 16 ♘xe6 ♕c4 17 ♘xg7+ (17 ♘2d4 is a better chance) 17...♔f8! favours Black.

15 ... ♘c5

16 ♘g3 d5! *(D)*

B



I could see from the expression on Smyslov's face that he already thought he was busted.

17 f5!?

On 17 e5 g6! 18 ♖c1 ♕b6! and if 19 c3 a5 followed by ...0-0 with a powerful attack in the works. Smyslov's keen positional judgement tells him that such a course for White is lifeless. So he sacs a pawn instead.

17 ... dxe4

18 ♕g4 exf5

19 ♘dxf5 g6!

Perhaps this simple retort had escaped him. Was he hoping for 19...0-0? 20 ♘h5! g6 21 ♕g3! winning material (if 21...♗d8, then 22 ♖xd8! ♕xd8 23 ♘f6+, etc.)? The rest of the game is, if one may use that hackneyed phrase, 'a matter of technique'. Black's a pawn ahead with the better game to boot.

20 ♘xe7

Not 20 ♘h6? ♗c8 21 ♕h4 ♗xh3 22 ♕xh3 ♗xg5.

20 ... ♕xe7
21 ♕f4 0-0
22 ♖d6 ♖ad8
23 ♖f6

Naturally Smyslov avoids swapping.

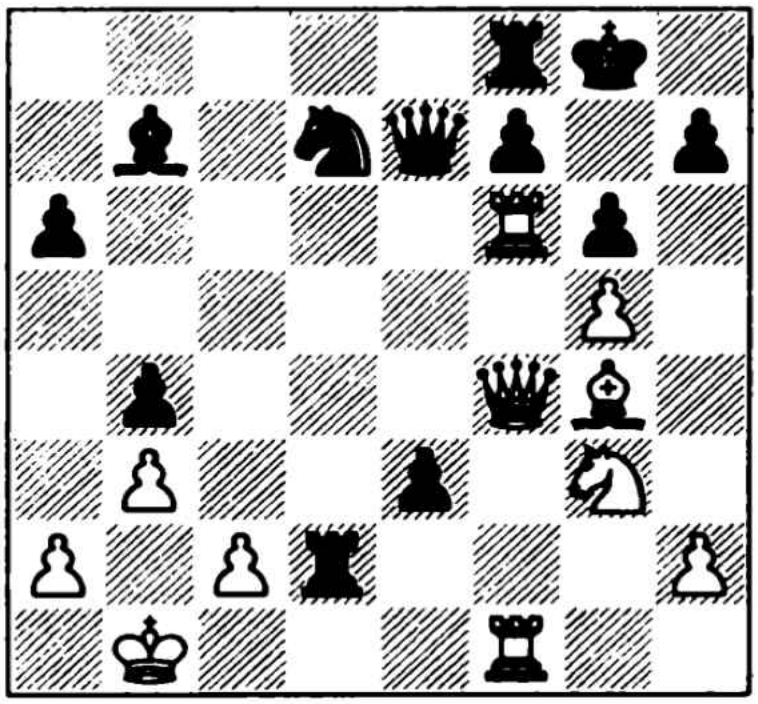
23 ... ♖d5
24 ♗g4 ♘d7
25 ♖f1

A desperate attempt to complicate. On 25 ♘xe4? ♖d4 26 ♗xd7 ♕xd7 picks up a piece. Or 25 ♕xe4 ♖d1+! 26 ♖xd1 ♗xe4 27 ♖xd7 ♕e5 and wins.

25 ... e3

Not 25...♘xf6? 26 gxf6 ♕e5 27 ♕h6 wins.

26 b3 ♖d2 *(D)*



Threatening 27...♘xf6 28 gxf6 ♕c5! 29 ♖c1 ♕d4. To avert further material loss, Smyslov is forced to indulge in the simplifications he ha been trying so hard to forestall.

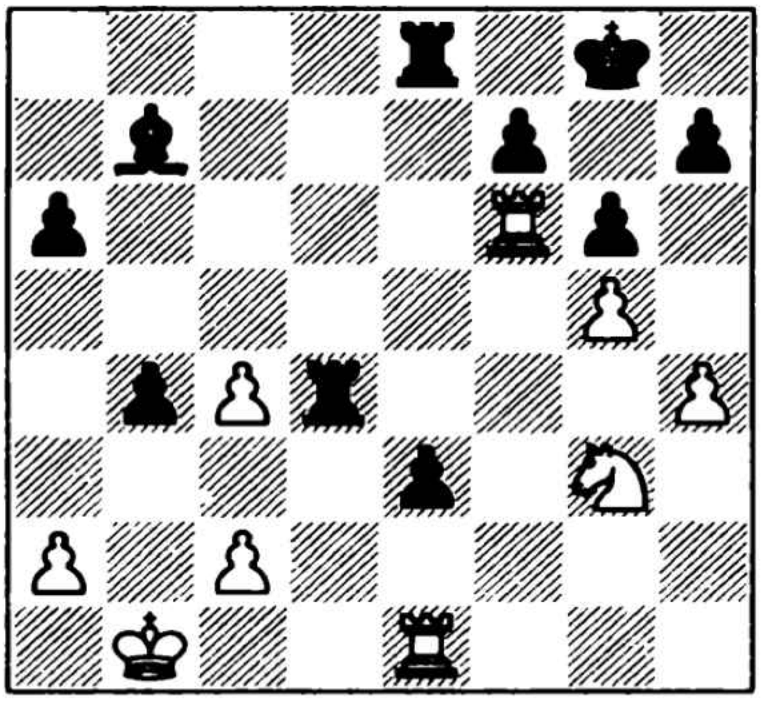
27 ♗xd7

Forced, but now White's gam rapidly deteriorates and the extr pawn makes its presence felt.

27 ... ♖xd7
28 ♖e1 ♖e8
29 h4 ♕c5!
30 ♕c4

Horrible, but necessary, to mee the main threat of ...♕c3.

30 ... ♕xc4
31 bxc4 ♖d4 *(D)*



Now Black hacks away unmerci fully.

32 c5 ♖xh4
33 c6 ♗c8
34 ♖d6 ♖c4
35 ♔b2 ♔g7
36 ♔b3 ♖g4
37 ♘e2 ♖e6!
38 ♖ed1

38 ♖xe6 ♗xe6+ 39 ♔b2 ♖c4, etc

38 ... ♖g2
39 ♘f4 ♖xd6

40 ♖xd6 ♖d2

41 ♖d3

The only move. Smyslov might have resigned had we adjourned here, but we both were playing fast and, as a consequence, were still well in the first session, carried by sheer momentum.

41 ... ♖f2

42 ♖d4

Again forced. On 42 ♘d5 e2 43 ♖e3 ♖f3 wins.

42 ... e2

43 ♘d3 ♗f5

44 c7 ♖f3

Quicker is 44...♗xd3 45 c8♕ e1♕ 46 ♖xd3 ♕b1+ 47 ♔a4 ♖xc2, etc.

45 c8♕ ♗xc8

Again 45...e1♕ was quicker, but I wanted to avoid 'complications'.

46 ♖e4 ♗f5

47 ♖xe2 ♗xd3

48 cxd3 ♖xd3+

49 ♔xb4 ♖d5

50 ♖g2 h6

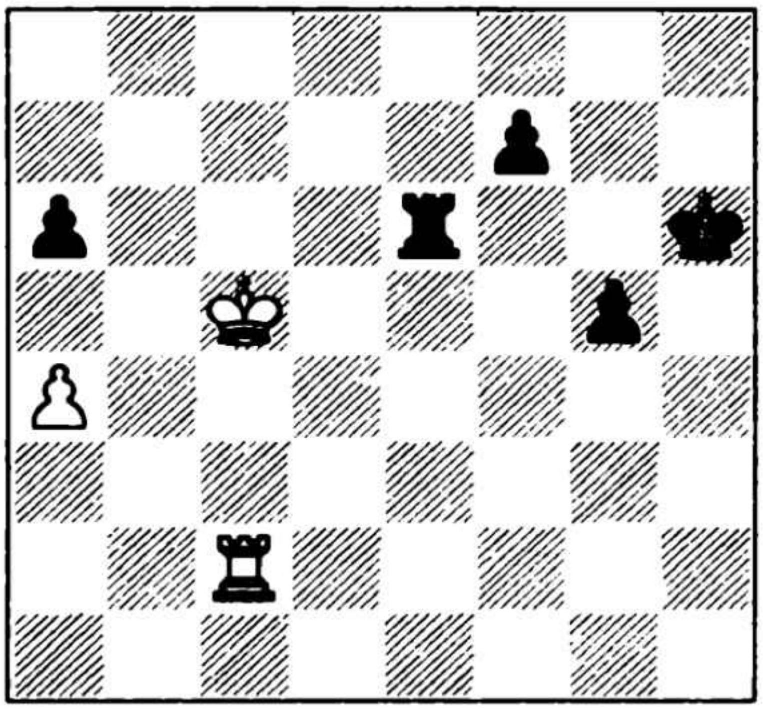
51 gxh6+ ♔xh6

52 a4 g5

53 ♖c2 ♖d6

54 ♔c5 ♖e6 *(D)*

0-1



Game 16

Fischer – Petrosian [USSR]

Belgrade/Bled/Zagreb Ct 1959

Caro-Kann Defence

Four queens

Fischer extracted a slight minus score from the seven games in which he wa called upon to face the Caro-Kann, prompting Botvinnik to note: "Fischer' both strong and weak point lies in that he is always true to himself and play the same way regardless of his opponents or any external factor."

This variation is not only complex and critical—but perilous. After a singl slip the edge passes to Black. But Petrosian overestimates his position and somewhat recklessly, dissipates his advantage. In time-pressure he misses a forced draw and Fischer regains the upper hand. From this point on, with four marauding queens roaming the board, the play becomes 'rich and strange'—resulting in a tortuous draw.

1 e4 c6
2 ♘c3 d5
3 ♘f3

The purpose of this line is to exclude the possibility of ...♗f5. For example, 3...dxe4 4 ♘xe4 ♗f5? 5 ♘g3 ♗g6 (if 5...♗g4, 6 h3) 6 h4 h6 7 ♘e5 ♗h7 8 ♕h5 g6 9 ♗c4! e6 10 ♕e2 (threatening ♘xf7) and Black has a terrible game.

3 ... ♗g4

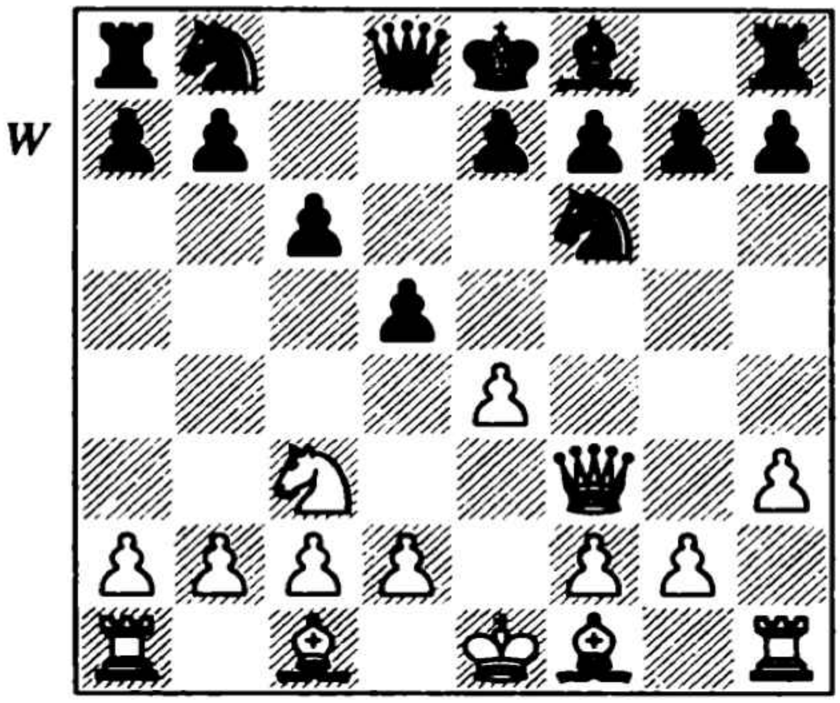
3...♘f6 4 e5 ♘e4 5 ♘e2! ♕b6 6 d4 c5 7 dxc5 ♕xc5 8 ♘ed4 ♘c6 9 ♗b5 a6 10 ♗xc6+ bxc6 11 0-0 ♕b6 12 e6! fxe6 13 ♗f4 is good for White; Fischer-Olafsson, Belgrade /Bled/Zagreb Ct 1959.

4 h3 ♗xf3

In our first-round game here, Smyslov played 4...♗h5 5 exd5 cxd5 6 ♗b5+ ♘c6 7 g4 ♗g6 8 ♘e5 ♖c8 9 d4 e6 10 h4 (correct is 10 ♕e2! to prevent ...f6) 10...f6 11 ♘xg6 hxg6 12 ♕d3 ♔f7 13 h5 gxh5 14 gxh5 ♘ge7 =.

5 ♕xf3 ♘f6 *(D)*

The old 5...e6 6 d4 dxe4 7 ♘xe4 ♕xd4 8 ♗d3 gives White a good attack for the pawn. After 5...dxe4 6 ♘xe4 ♘d7 7 ♘g5!? (better is simply 7 d4) 7...♘gf6 8 ♕b3 e6 9 ♕xb7 ♘d5! Black gets good play; Fischer-Cardoso, Portorož IZ 1958.



6 d3

Inferior is 6 d4 dxe4 7 ♘xe4 (7 ♕e3 ♘bd7 8 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 9 ♕xe4 ♘f6 10 ♕d3 ♕d5! is equal; Fischer-Keres, Bled 1961) 7...♕xd4 8 ♗d3 ♘bd7 (threatening ...♘e5).

On 6 e5 ♘fd7 7 e6? (playable is 7 ♕g3 e6 8 ♗e2 Spassky-Reshko, Leningrad 1961), 7...fxe6 8 d4 e5!.

Finally 6 g3 dxe4 7 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 8 ♕xe4 ♕d5! 9 ♕xd5 cxd5 10 ♗g2 e6 (if 11 c4 ♘c6 12 cxd5, then 12...♘b4!) gives Black an even ending (Suetin).

6 ... e6
7 g3

A recent try is 7 ♗d2 followed by 0-0-0. Against Larsen, at Zurich 1959, I tried 7 a3 ♗c5 8 ♗e2 0-0 9 0-0 ♘bd7 and Black got a satisfactory game.

7 ... ♗b4

8 ♗d2

Not 8 ♗g2? d4 9 a3 ♕a5 winning material.

8 ... d4

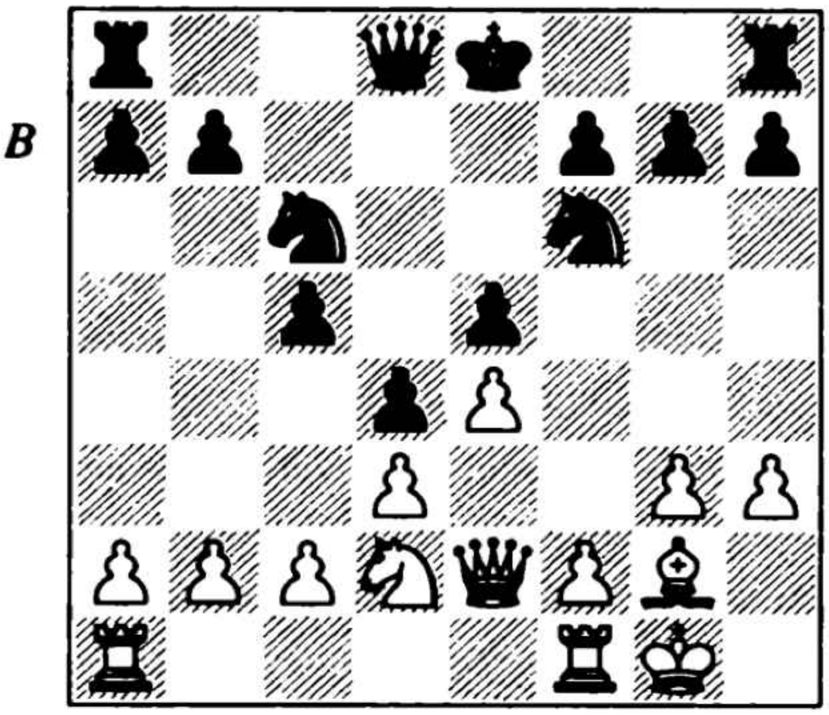
Inferior is 8...♕b6 9 0-0-0 d4 10 ♘e2.

9 ♘b1 ♗xd2+

In this tournament both Keres and Benko tried 9...♕b6 forcing White to weaken the queenside with 10 b3. But Black's queen is slightly misplaced after 10...♘bd7 11 ♗g2 a5 12 a3 ♗xd2+ (the retreat 12...♗e7 seems illogical—even though Keres beat me with it) 13 ♘xd2 ♕c5 14 ♕d1 h5 15 h4! with an edge; Fischer-Benko. Petrosian apparently didn't want to get involved with this line, despite the fact that his countryman, Tal, accused me of 'bad judgement' for preferring White here.

10 ♘xd2 e5
11 ♗g2 c5
12 0-0 ♘c6
13 ♕e2 *(D)*

The critical juncture. In our earlier game (round two) Petrosian continued with 13...g5 14 ♘f3? (Simagin gives 14 f4 gxf4 15 gxf4 ♕e7 16 ♘c4 ♘d7 17 ♕g4 'with advantage' but after 17...0-0-0 18 fxe5 ♔b8 Black succeeds in planting his knight on e5, from where it cannot be dislodged) 14...h6 15 h4 ♖g8 16 a3 ♕e7 17 hxg5 hxg5 18 ♕d2 ♘d7 19 c3 0-0-0 20 cxd4 exd4 with advantage for Black.



Fearing a prepared line, Petrosian deviates. On 13...g5 I had intended 14 c3! ♕e7 15 ♘f3 h6 16 cxd4! exd4 (if 16...♘xd4 17 ♘xd4 cxd4 18 ♖ac1. Or 16...cxd4 17 h4 ♖g8 18 hxg5 hxg5 19 ♖fc1 0-0-0 20 b4! ♔b8 21 b5 ♘a5 22 ♕d2 wins a pawn) 17 e5! 0-0-0 18 ♖fe1. Now the bishop diagonal is unblocked and Black can't set up a blockade on e5, as in our first game.

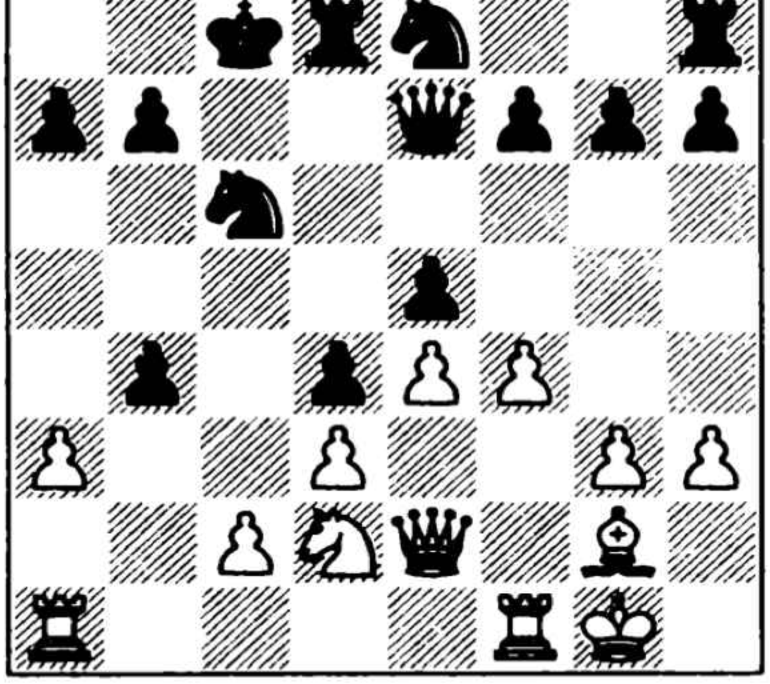
After 13...0-0 14 f4 ♔h8 15 f5 ♘g8 16 g4 f6 White has a tough nut to crack, but his initiative is permanent. The text indicates Petrosian's intention to castle long without trying to prevent f4.

14 f4 0-0-0
15 a3 ♘e8

Also playable is 15...♘d7 16 b4 f6 and if 17 ♘c4 b5.

16 b4 cxb4 *(D)*

Wide open! Safer is 16...f6 17 b5 (if 17 bxc5 ♕xc5 18 fxe5 ♘xe5) 17...♘a5 18 ♘b3 ♘xb3 19 cxb3 ♔b8 20 a4 =.



Now Black has time to consolidate. 17 fxe5! is correct, with advantage in all variations:

a) 17...♕xe5 18 ♖xf7 ♕xg3 19 e5! ♕e3+ 20 ♕xe3 dxe3 21 ♘c4.

b) 17...bxa3 18 ♘c4 ♖f8 19 ♖xa3 (if 19...b5, 20 ♕g4+!).

c) 17...♘xe5 18 axb4 ♔b8 19 ♘f3 f6 20 ♕f2! ♘xf3+ (if 20...♕xb4, 21 ♘xe5 fxe5 22 ♕f7 penetrates) 21 ♕xf3 ♘d6 (if 21...♕xb4, then 22 e5!) 22 ♖a5 a6 23 ♕f4 ♖he8 24 ♖d5.

d) 17...♔b8 18 axb4 ♘xb4 (the line 18...♘xe5 19 ♘f3 transposes to 'c') 19 ♘c4 ♘c6 (if 19...♘c7 20 ♘d6! ♖hf8 21 ♖fb1 ♘ca6 22 ♕d2 ♕xe5 23 ♘xb7! ♔xb7 24 ♖xa6! wins) 20 ♕f3 ♖f8 21 e6! ♕xe6 22 e5! followed by ♖fb1 and White has a winning attack.

17 ... f6!

I had expected 17...bxa3 18 fxe5 transposing to 'b' above.

18 fxe5 fxe5

19 axb4 ♘c7

Black intends a queenside blockade. The b-pawn won't run away.

20 ♘a5 ♘b5!

I already knew I'd been outplayed. Petrosian didn't even consider 20...♘xb4 opening up the lines.

21 ♘xc6 bxc6

22 ♖f2 g6

On 22...♕xb4?, 23 ♕g4+ ♖d7 24 ♖f7 ♖d8 25 ♕xg7 regains the pawn.

23 h4 ♔b7

Ordinarily one would expect Petrosian to simplify and simplify in order to reach a winning ending. 23...♖hf8! is strong.

24 h5 ♕xb4

Really risky! I was amazed he was allowing so much counterplay. 24...♖hf8 is still correct. After 24...gxh5 25 ♕xh5 ♖hf8, White has 26 ♖f5!.

25 ♖f7+ ♔b6

On 25...♔b8, 26 ♕f2 ♖hf8 27 c4! ♘c7 (if 27...dxc3, 28 ♖axa7! ♖xf7 29 ♕b6+) 28 ♕f6 with good play.

26 ♕f2! a5

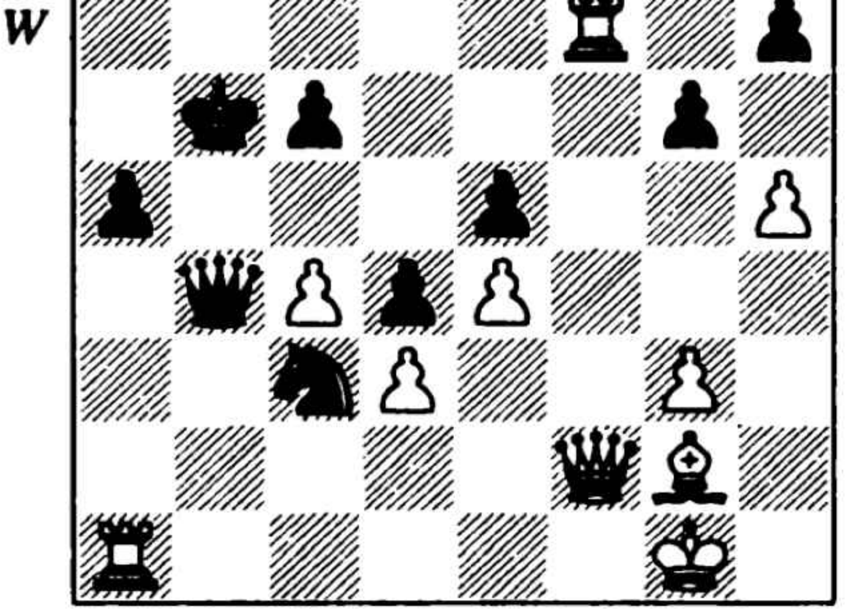
Not 26...♖hf8?, when 27 c4! ♘c3 28 ♖axa7 wins.

27 c4 ♘c3? *(D)*

Continuing to underestimate the danger. 27 ♘d6 is safer.

28 ♖f1?

Why didn't I play 28 ♕f6! immediately? If then 28...♖df8 (28...♖hf8 29 ♖f1! ♖xf7 30 ♕xd8+! ♖c7 31 ♖f7 wins) 29 ♕xe5 ♖xf7 30 ♕xh8 ♕c5 31 e5—it's difficult for Black in view of his exposed king and White's passed e-pawn.



Finally, after 28 ♕f6! ♕c5 29 ♕g7! ♔a6 (if 29...a4 30 ♖a7! or 29...♖a8 30 ♖b7+ ♔a6 31 ♕c7! ♖hc8 32 ♖b5! wins. Or 29...♖dg8 30 ♖b7+ ♔a6 31 ♕c7 ♖c8 32 ♖xa5+!) 30 ♖a7+! ♕xa7 31 ♖xa5+ ♔xa5 32 ♕xa7+ ♔b4 33 ♕b6+ ♔a3 34 c5! and White's c-pawn is dangerous.

28 ... a4

Still playing with reckless abandon! Safer is 28...♕d6 to prevent ♕f6.

29 ♕f6 ♕c5

30 ♖xh7!

Now I decided to start playing for the win. 30 ♕g7 ♖dg8! 31 ♖b7+ ♔a6 32 ♕c7 ♖c8!! 33 ♕g7 ♖cg8! is a draw by a 'perpetual check' on the queen.

30 ... ♖df8!

Forcing what looks like a favourable ending.

31 ♕xg6 ♖xf1+

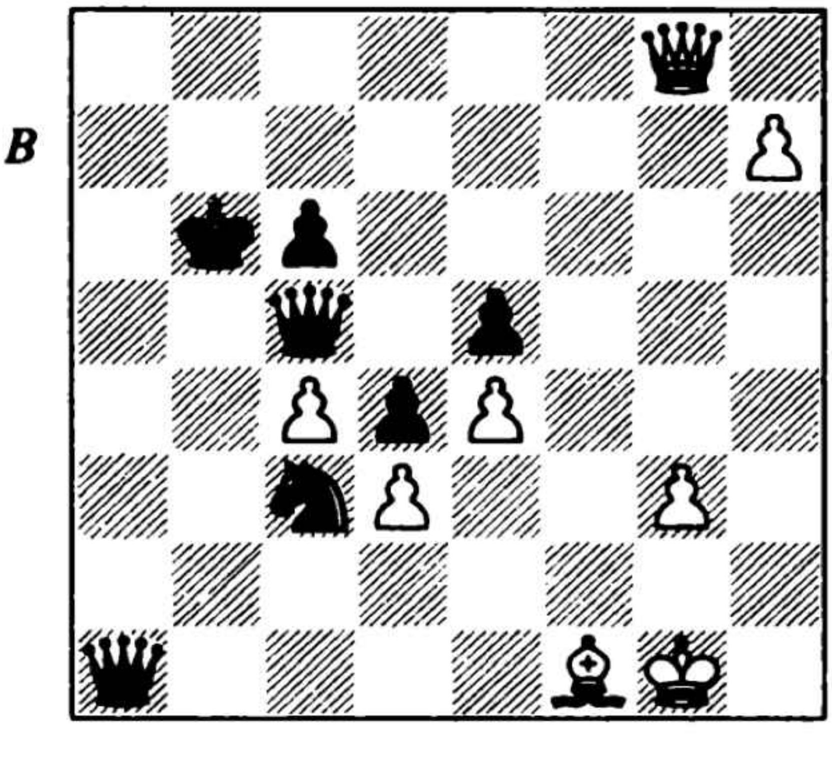
32 ♗xf1 ♖xh7

33 ♕xh7 a3

Petrosian had been banking on the speed of this pawn.

35 ♕g8 a1♕

36 h7 *(D)*



36 ... ♕d6?

In time-pressure, Petrosian overlooks 36...♘e2+ 37 ♔f2 ♘xg3! and White has nothing better than to take a perpetual with 38 ♕b8+.

37 h8♕ ♕a7

38 g4 ♔c5!

A good last-ditch try. Curiously, the king will be safer in White's territory where it obtains shelter from the cluster of pawns.

39 ♕f8?

Right is 39 ♕h2! immediately, preventing Black's king from reaching safety behind White's lines. If then 39...♕f6 40 g5, or 39...♕a1 (39...♕a2? 40 ♕xa2 ♘xa2 41 ♕a8! wins a piece) 40 ♕g7 wins the e-pawn. Finally on 39...♕ae7, 40 ♕a8 renews the attack.

39 ... ♕ae7

Forced, to defend against the threat of ♕xe5+.

Not 39...♕xf8 40 ♕xf8+ ♔b6 41 ♕b4+ ♔a6 (if 41...♔c7, 42 ♕e7+) 42 ♕a3+ ♔b7 43 ♕xa7+ ♔xa7 44 g5 and queens.

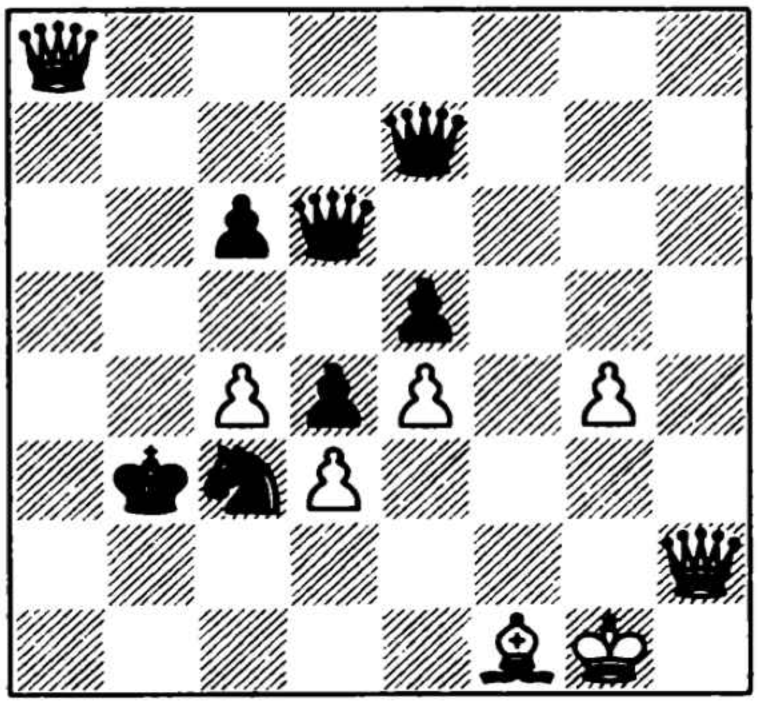
40 ♕a8

I thought this was it! The two queens are closing in for the kill.

40 ... ♔b4!

41 ♕h2 ♔b3! *(D)*

Slippery as an eel!



Now White sealed. It's fantastically complicated!

The tournament bulletins suggest 42 c5 ♕xc5 (if 42...♕g6, 43 ♗e2! ♕gg5 44 ♗d1+!) 43 ♕g8+ ♔a3 44 ♕c2 ♕b4 45 ♕a8+ ♕a4 (not 45...♘a4? 46 ♕c1+ ♔a2 47 ♕g8+ ♕b3 48 ♕c2+! winning) 46 ♕cxa4+ ♘xa4 47 ♕xc6 'with good winning chances', but after 47...♘c3 it's likely Black can draw.

42 ♕a1

After the game a kibitzer asked Petrosian if he thought 42 c5 would have won for White. Petrosian, who must have analysed it for many hours (not knowing, of course, what my sealed move was) simply replied: "I don't know."

42 ... ♕a3

The only move to stop the mate on b2.

43 ♕xa3+ ♔xa3

44 ♕h6

Now White has to try to make do with the g-pawn.

44 ... ♕f7!

45 ♔g2

45 ♕xc6 is met by 45...♘d1!.

45 ... ♔b3

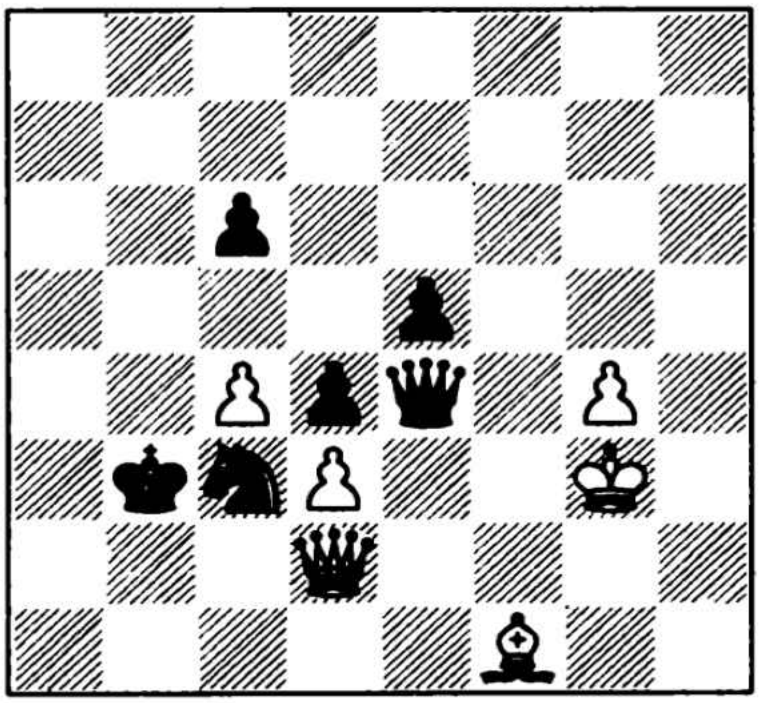
Not 45...♘d1 46 ♕c1+ ♘b2 and the knight is stranded out-of-play. The text renews the threat of ...♘d1.

46 ♕d2 ♕h7!

47 ♔g3

A gross oversight, but probably best anyway! White can't win anymore. If 47 g5 ♕h4 etc.

47 ... ♕xe4! *(D)*



48 ♕f2?

Having overlooked Petrosian's last move, I was somewhat shaken!

Not 48 dxe4? ♘xe4+ 49 ♔h4 ♘xd2 50 g5 ♘xf1 51 g6 d3 winning for Black. Also on 48 ♕d1+? (48 ♕xc3+? dxc3 49 dxe4 c2 is also winning for Black) 48...♘xd1 49 dxe4 ♘e3 50 ♗e2 ♘xc4 51 g5 ♘d6 g6 ♘e8 Black again wins.

The right retort, however, is 48 g5! and it's still a hard fight.

48 ... ♕h1!

I offered a draw, afraid that he wouldn't accept. Black certainly has the edge now, e.g. 49 g5 e4!, or 49 ♗g2 ♕h6.

After having fought so hard for the draw, however, Petrosian was obviously unprepared to readjust his frame of mind and start playing for a win. So ...

½-½

Game 17

Fischer – Tal [USSR]

Belgrade/Bled/Zagreb Ct 1959

Sicilian Defence

A very near miss

This is one of the four games that Fischer lost to Tal who, in winning this tournament, earned the right to meet and trounce Botvinnik for the world championship.

In jest the whimsical Tal signed Fischer's name, in addition to his own, when asked for an autograph. "Why not?" he quipped, "I've beaten Bobby so often ... that gives me the right to sign for him!"

A careful reading of Fischer's notes will reveal a clear echo of the strong emotions that engulfed him during this tense encounter. He misses a win in the opening and several draws along the way, demonstrating dramatically how a continuously advantageous position can abruptly be turned into defeat by seemingly insignificant miscalculations.

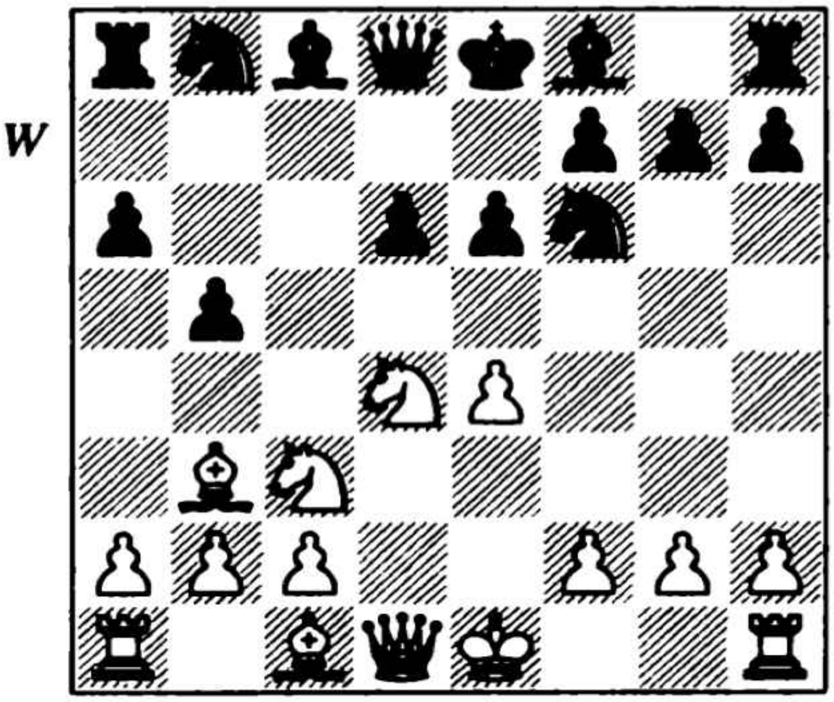
1 e4 c5
2 ♘f3 d6
3 d4 cxd4
4 ♘xd4 ♘f6
5 ♘c3 a6
6 ♗c4

We had some excellent results with this. See also Games 55 and 58.

6 ... e6
7 ♗b3

I had no better luck against Blackstone, in an exhibition game at Davis, California, 1964, with 7 0-0 ♗e7 8 ♗b3 ♕c7 9 f4 b5 10 f5 b4 11 fxe6!? (11 ♘ce2 e5 12 ♘f3 ♗b7 is bad for White) 11...bxc3 12 exf7+ ♔f8 13 ♗g5 ♘g4! and now Black should win.

7 ... b5! *(D)*



This reaction must be prompt!

In our first lap game here Tal played the weaker 7...♗e7? 8 f4 0-0 (for 8...b5 see the note to Black's 8th move) 9 ♕f3 ♕c7 and now 10 f5! (instead of 10 0-0? b5 11 f5 b4! 12 ♘a4 e5 13 ♘e2 ♗b7 and Black stands better) 10...e5 (not 10...♘c6 11 ♗e3 with a bind) 11 ♘de2 b5 12 a3 ♗b7 13 g4 gives White a strong attack.

8 f4!?

Against Olafsson, at Buenos Aires 1960, I continued 8 0-0 ♗e7 (if 8...b4, 9 ♘a4 ♘xe4 10 ♖e1 ♘f6 11 ♗g5 with an attack) 9 ♕f3!? ♕c7 (not 9...♗b7? 10 ♗xe6!) 10 ♕g3 b4 11 ♘ce2 g6 12 c3? (13 ♗h6! is very strong) 12...♘xe4 13 ♕e3 ♘f6 14 cxb4 0-0 with a double-edged position.

R. Byrne-Evans, US Ch 1967 continued 8 ♕f3 but White got nothing after 8...♗b7 9 ♗g5 b4 10 ♘a4 ♘bd7 11 0-0 ♕a5 12 ♗xf6 ♘xf6 13 ♖fe1 ♗e7.

8 ... b4!

Indirectly undermining White's centre.

9 ♘a4 ♘xe4

9...♗b7 is also playable.

10 0-0 g6?

Correct is 10...♗b7.

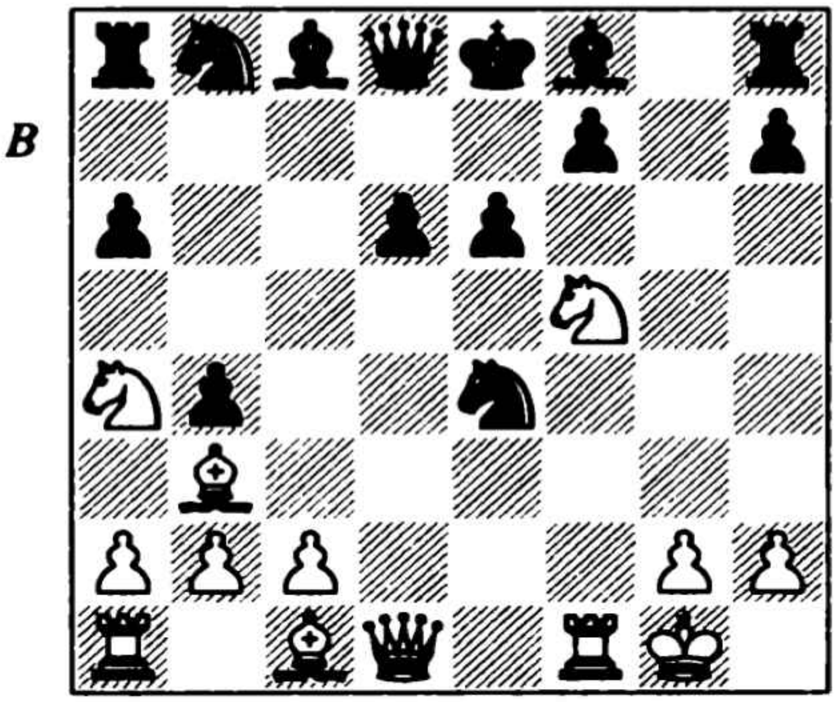
11 f5!

This riposte caught Tal totally unaware. Black's king is trapped in the centre and will soon be subject to mayhem.

11 ... gxf5

Not 11...exf5 12 ♗d5 ♖a7 13 ♘xf5! gxf5 14 ♕d4.

12 ♘xf5! *(D)*



Panov, with typical iron curtain 'objectivity', commented in the Soviet tournament bulletins: "Almost all game Fischer played in Tal style, but all his trouble was in vain because Tal did not defend in Fischer style—instead he found the one and only saving counterchance!"

12 ... ♖g8

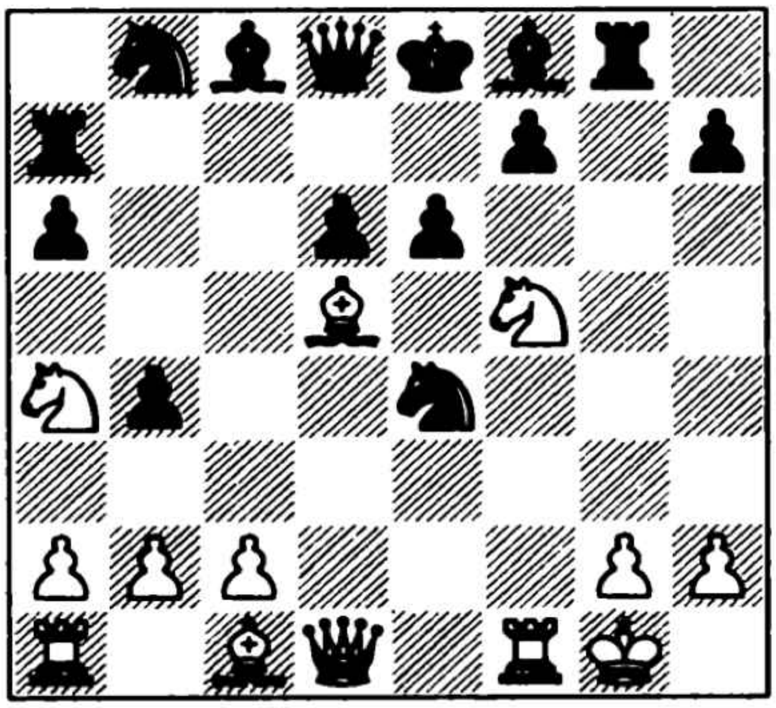
Woozy, Tal stumbles into a dubious defence. Better is 12...d5 (and not 12...exf5? 13 ♕d5 ♖a7 14 ♕d4 spearing a rook) 13 ♘h6 ♗xh6 14 ♗xh6.

13 ♗d5!

A shot!

13 ... ♖a7 *(D)*

"13...exd5 14 ♕xd5 ♗xf5 15 ♖xf5 ♖a7 16 ♕xe4+ ♖e7 17 ♕xb4 ♖e2 18 ♗g5! ♖xg5 19 ♖xg5 ♕xg5 20 ♕xb8+ wins." (Panov)



14 ♗xe4?

Correct is 14 ♗e3! ♘c5 15 ♕h5! ♖g6 (if 15...♘xa4, 16 ♗xa7 exd5 17 ♖ae1+) 16 ♖ae1! and White's every piece is bearing down on Black's king (Kevitz).

14 ... exf5

15 ♗xf5

Probably it's better to avoid exchanges with 15 ♗d5 or 15 ♗f3.

15 ... ♖e7!

A unique way of shielding the e-file.

16 ♗xc8 ♕xc8

17 ♗f4?

The right move is simply 17 c3! (certainly not 17 ♕xd6? ♖xg2+ 18 ♔xg2 ♖e2+ 19 ♔f3 ♗xd6 20 ♔xe2 ♕xc2+ winning for Black) and if 17...♕c6, then 18 ♖f2.

17 ... ♕c6!

18 ♕f3 ♕xa4!

Such a surprise that I didn't dare believe my eyes! I had expected 18...♕xf3 19 ♖xf3 ♖e2 20 ♖f2 ♖xf2 21 ♔xf2 and White has a slight edge after a3 because of Black's disconnected pawns.

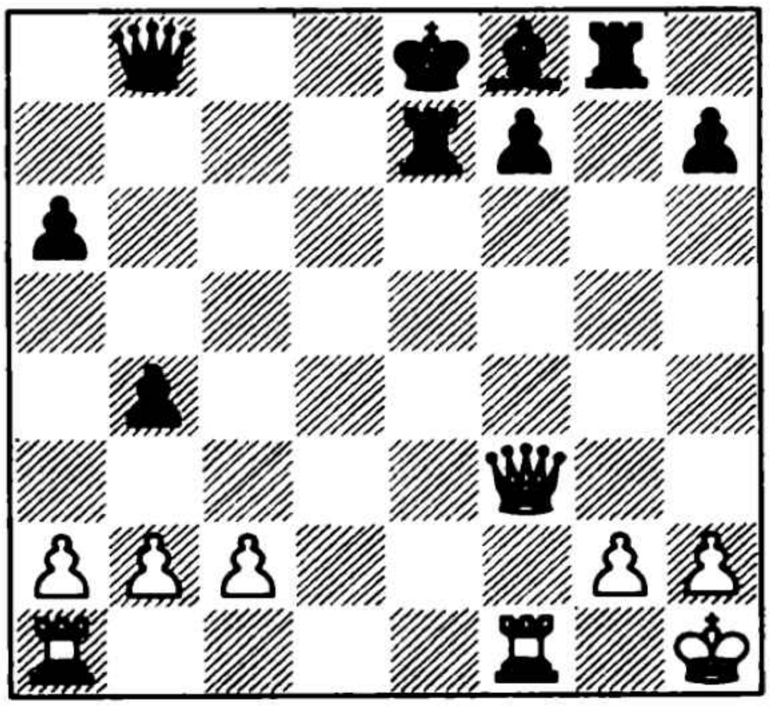
19 ♗xd6 ♕c6!

Tal finds an inspired defence.

20 ♗xb8 ♕b6+

White remains a clear pawn ahead in the line 20...♕xf3 21 ♖xf3 ♗g7 22 c3.

21 ♔h1 ♕xb8 *(D)*



The crowd was shouting and whistling with each move. Later I was informed that many sport fans were in the audience. Maybe some soccer match had been cancelled. As a consequence chess was the main attraction that day in Belgrade.

22 ♕c6+

Many annotators believed that 22 ♖ae1 was the winning move. Tal himself confessed he thought Black was lost after that. But 22...♔d8! holds in all lines (not 22...♖g6? 23 ♕xf7+ ♔d7 24 ♖d1+! ♖d6 25 ♖xd6+ ♔xd6 26 ♖f6+! wins). I've studied this position for ages, it seems, and the best I can find is 23 ♖d1+ ♔c7 (23...♔c8? 24 ♕c6+ wins) 24 ♕f4+ (24 ♖d4 ♕b7!) 24...♔b7 25 ♖d6 ♕c7 26 ♕xb4+ ♔c8 27 ♖xa6 ♕b7 28 ♕xb7+ ♔xb7 29 ♖af6 ♖g7 =.

22 ... ♖d7

23 ♖ae1+

Black holds after 23 ♖ad1 ♗d6 24 ♖xf7 (if 24 ♖f6 ♖g6 25 ♖dxd6? ♕xd6!) 24...♕c7, etc., or 23 ♖xf7 ♕d6.

23 ... ♗e7

Finally Tal 'develops' his bishop. Not 23...♔d8 24 ♖xf7! ♗e7 25 ♖fxe7 ♖xe7 26 ♖d1+ winning.

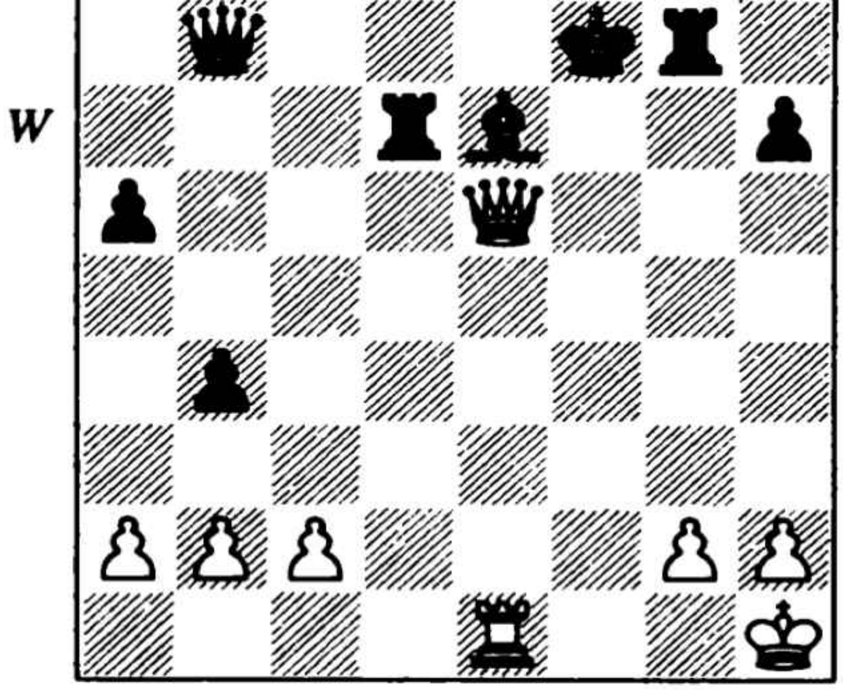
24 ♖xf7 ♔xf7

25 ♕e6+ ♔f8! *(D)*

I thought he had to go to g7, whereupon 26 ♕xd7 wins easily.

26 ♕xd7

Not 26 ♖f1+ ♔g7 27 ♖f7+ ♔h8 when 28 ♕xd7 ♖d8 29 ♕g4 ♕e5 wins for Black.



26 ... ♕d6

27 ♕b7 ♖g6

Within a handful of moves the game has changed its complexion. Now it is White who must fight for a draw!

28 c3!

Black's extra piece means less with each pawn that's exchanged.

28 ... a5

On 28...bxc3, 29 ♕c8+ ♗d8 30 ♕xc3 =.

29 ♕c8+

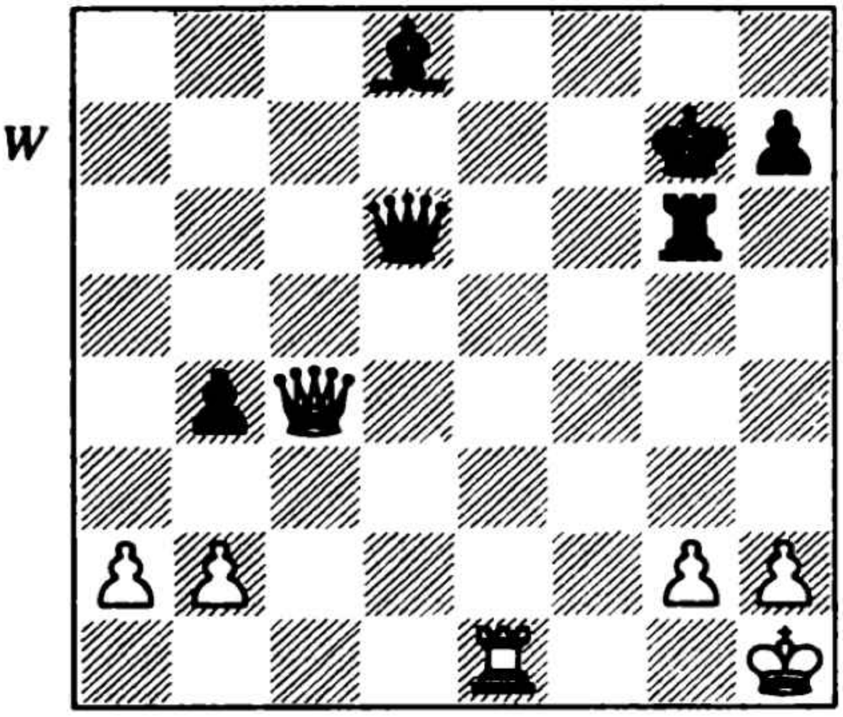
On the wrong track. Right is 29 cxb4! ♕xb4 (if 29...axb4 30 a3! bxa3 31 bxa3 ♕xa3 draws) 30 ♕f3+ ♔g7 31 ♕e2 draws, since Black can't possibly build up a winning kingside attack and his own king is too exposed.

29 ... ♔g7

30 ♕c4 ♗d8

31 cxb4 axb4 *(D)*

On 31...♕xb4 32 ♕e2 White should draw with best play.



32 g3?

Creating losing chances. I don't see how Black can make any progress after 32 ♛e4. If 32...♝c7, 33 ♛e7+ ♚g8 34 ♛e8+ ♛f8 35 ♛e4, etc.

32 ... ♛c6+
33 ♜e4 ♛xc4
34 ♜xc4 ♜b6!

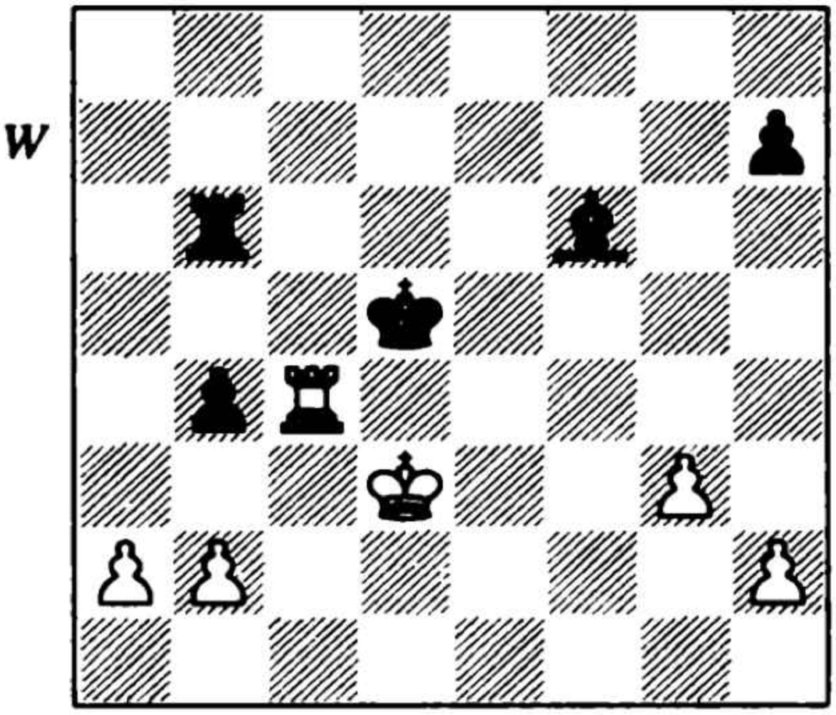
I overlooked this. Now Black has winning chances. I had planned on a draw after 34...♝e7? 35 a3! dissolving Black's b-pawn (35...b3 is answered by 36 ♜c7 followed by ♜b7 homing in on b3).

35 ♚g2 ♚f6
36 ♚f3 ♚e5
37 ♚e3

37 a3 is met, as always, by b3. Once White can eliminate Black's b-pawn it's a theoretical draw.

37 ... ♝g5+
38 ♚e2 ♚d5
39 ♚d3 ♝f6 *(D)*

White might be able to draw this ending, but it's an ugly defensive



40 ♜c2?

Too passive. I wanted to avoid immobilising my queenside pawns with 40 b3 but it's the best hope now. On 40...♝e7, 41 ♜d4+ preserves drawing chances.

40 ... ♝e5
41 ♜e2 ♜f6
42 ♜c2 ♜f3+
43 ♚e2 ♜f7
44 ♚d3 ♝d4!

Little by little Tal inches his way in.

45 a3

45 b3 ♜f3+ 46 ♚e2 ♜f2+ 47 ♚d3 ♜xc2 48 ♚xc2 ♚e4 wins for Black.

45 ... b3
46 ♜c8

Equally hopeless is 46 ♜e2 (or 46 ♜d2 ♜f3+ 47 ♚e2 ♜f2+) 46...♜f3+ 47 ♚d2 ♝xb2, etc.

46 ... ♝xb2
47 ♜d8+ ♚c6
48 ♜b8 ♜f3+
49 ♚c4 ♜c3+
50 ♚b4 ♚c7

52 a4 b2

0-1

If 53 ♔xc3 b1♕+!.

This discovered-check theme is strangely reminiscent of the finale of game 31.

Game 18

Spassky [USSR] – Fischer

Mar del Plata 1960

King's Gambit

Old wine in a new bottle

Here is the second of the three losses contained in this volume. As in the previous example, Fischer misses a win by inches. Deviating from his cherished Sicilian, he enables Spassky to employ the King's Gambit—not quite believing he would. Spassky is one of the few grandmasters who still does so in competition. Fischer promptly wins a pawn and hangs on to it, but neglects to steer for a highly favourable ending (23...♕g3). Just four moves later, 27 ♖e5! effects his undoing.

Undaunted by this early setback, Fischer scored 12½ out of his last 13, pulling neck and neck with Spassky for first.

1 e4 e5

2 f4 exf4

3 ♘f3 g5

This loss spurred me to look for a 'refutation' of the King's Gambit, which I published in the *American Chess Quarterly*, Vol. 1 (1961) No. 1. The right move is 3...d6!.

4 h4

The only realistic try for any advantage. There is no longer anything 'romantic' about the Muzio Gambit, which has been analysed to a draw after 4 ♗c4 g4 5 0-0 (5 ♘e5 ♕h4+ 6 ♔f1 ♘c6!) 5...gxf3 6 ♕xf3 ♕f6, etc.

4 ... g4

5 ♘e5 ♘f6

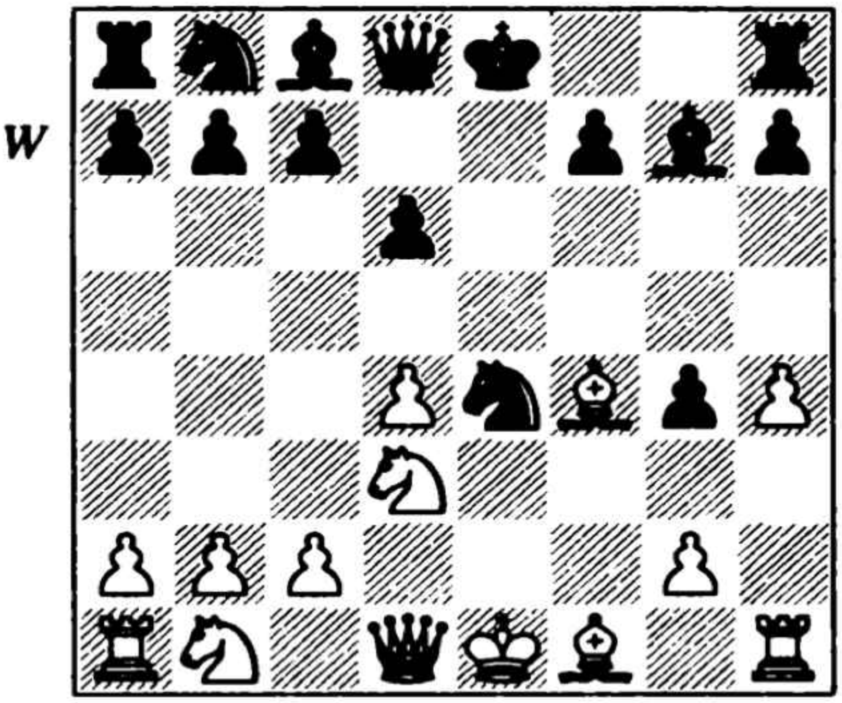
On 5...h5 6 ♗c4 ♖h7 7 d4 d6 8 ♘d3 f3 9 gxf3 ♗e7 10 ♗e3 ♗xh4+ 11 ♔d2 ♗g5 12 f4 ♗h6 13 ♘c3 White has more than enough compensation for the pawn. This is vintage analysis.

6 d4

On 6 ♗c4 d5 7 exd5 the modern panacea is 7...♗g7 (the old 7...♗d6 is also adequate). And on 6 ♘xg4 ♘xe4 7 d3 ♘g3 8 ♗xf4 ♘xh1 9 ♕e2+ (9 ♗g5 ♗e7 10 ♕e2 h5 11 ♕e5 f6! 12 ♘xf6+ ♔f7 wins for

Black—Steinitz) 9...♕e7 10 ♘f6+ ♔d8 11 ♗xc7+ ♔xc7 12 ♘d5+ ♔d8 13 ♘xe7 ♗xe7 Black should win; Morphy-Anderssen, Paris 1858.

6 ... d6
7 ♘d3 ♘xe4
8 ♗xf4 ♗g7 *(D)*



9 ♘c3?

After this White has no compensation for the pawn. Better is 9 c3 ♕e7 10 ♕e2 ♗f5. At least White maintains a grip on f4—for what that's worth.

9 ... ♘xc3
10 bxc3 c5

Immediately nibbling at White's centre. Keres gives 10...0-0 first.

11 ♗e2

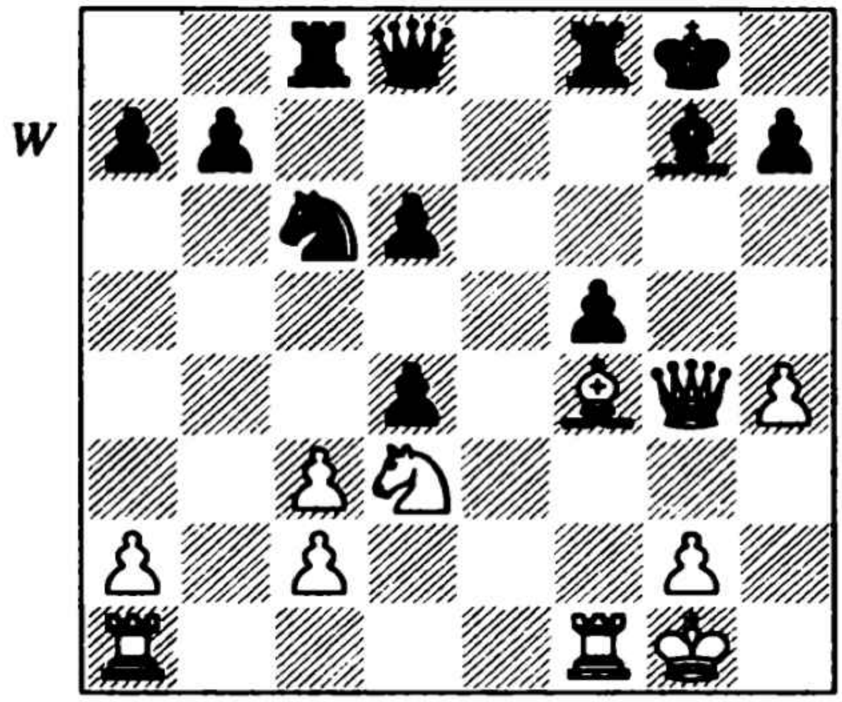
On 11 ♕e2+, Black replies with 11...♗e6 (12 d5? ♗xc3+).

11 ... cxd4
12 0-0 ♘c6

It doesn't pay to be greedy with 12...h5. After 13 ♗g5 f6 14 ♗c1 followed by ♘f4 Black's kingside is all messed up.

13 ♗xg4 0-0
14 ♗xc8 ♖xc8
15 ♕g4 f5 *(D)*

Winning a second pawn, but creating a kingside weakness. Simply 15...♔h8 is stronger.



16 ♕g3 dxc3
17 ♖ae1

Black snatches the initiative after 17 ♗xd6 ♖f6 18 ♗f4 ♖g6.

17 ... ♔h8

Also good is 17...♕d7 18 ♗xd6 ♖fe8 and if 19 ♘c5 ♕f7 (Kmoch).

18 ♔h1?

More accurate is 18 ♗xd6 ♖f6 (if 18...♖g8, 19 ♘e5!) 19 ♗e5 ♘xe5 20 ♘xe5 with a little play left for White.

18 ... ♖g8

On 18...d5, 19 ♘c5 creates problems.

19 ♗xd6 ♗f8!

The key! On 19...♗d4, 20 ♕h2 ♖g4 21 ♗e5+! (to prevent Black from doubling rooks on the g-file) 21...♔g8 (not 21...♗xe5 22 ♘xe5

♖xh4? 23 ♘f7+) 22 ♗g3 holds for White.

20 ♗e5+ ♘xe5

21 ♕xe5+ ♖g7!

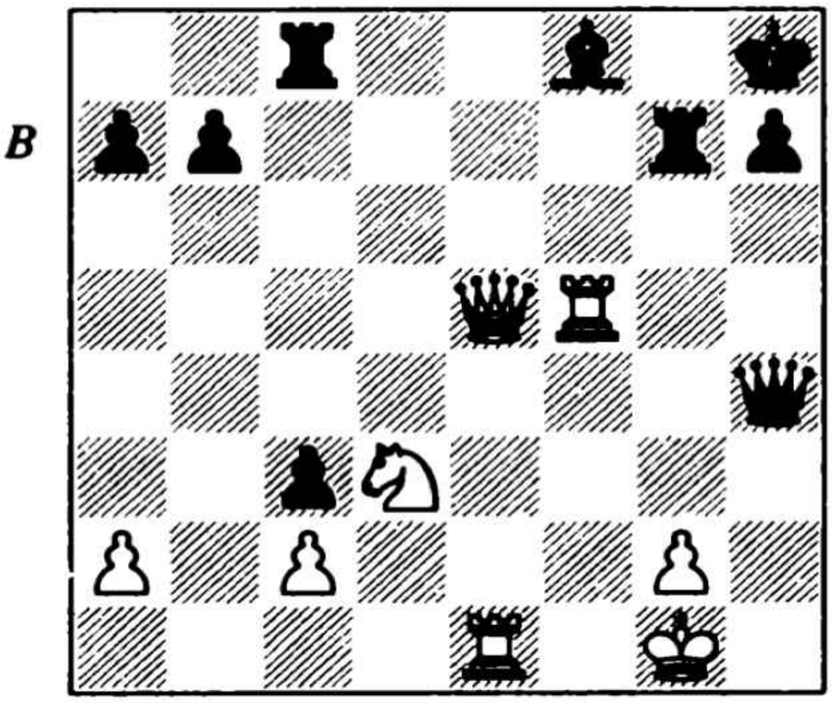
Now White's h-pawn must fall.

22 ♖xf5

What else? On 22 ♕xf5 (22 ♖f4? ♗d6 and 22 ♕f4? ♖g4 are worse), 22...♕xh4+ 23 ♔g1 ♕g4 forces a favourable exchange of queens (24 ♕f2 ♗d6 gives Black a strong attack).

22 ... ♕xh4+

23 ♔g1 *(D)*



23 ... ♕g4?

Drifting. Not realising the danger, I thought Black could whip up an attack along the g-file. But correct is 23...♕g3! 24 ♕xg3 (if 24 ♕e2 ♗d6) 24...♖xg3 (threatening ...♖xd3 followed by ...c2) and White, a pawn down, has a tough ending to hold—as Spassky pointed out in our post-mortem analysis.

24 ♖f2 ♗e7

Threatening ...♗h4.

25 ♖e4 ♕g5

I started to feel uncomfortable, but little did I imagine that Black's game would collapse in four short moves! I should have taken a draw by repetition with 25...♕d1+ 26 ♖e1 ♕g4 27 ♖e4 ♕d1+ etc. And if 28 ♔h2 then 28...♖c6 29 ♕b8+ ♖g8 30 ♕e5+ ♖g7.

26 ♕d4!

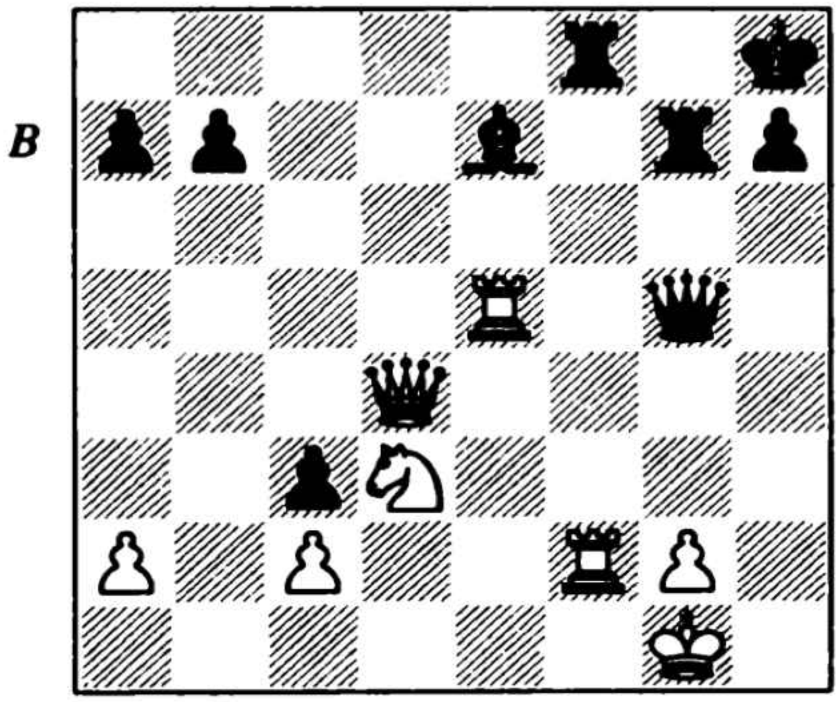
This powerful centralisation completely paralyses Black.

26 ... ♖f8?

Overlooking White's real threat. I was worried about ♘e5, not realising it could be met successfully with ...♗c5. The right defence is 26...♗f8! 27 ♕xa7 (if 27 ♘e5 ♗c5 28 ♘f7+ ♔g8 29 ♘xg5 ♗xd4 30 ♖xd4 ♖xg5) 27...♗d6 =.

27 ♖e5! *(D)*

I had only reckoned on 27 ♘e5? ♖xf2 28 ♕xf2 ♗c5! 29 ♕xc5 ♕xg2 mate.



Incredibly, Black must lose a piece. While trying to figure out what was going on in Spassky's head, I had blundered and lost the game!

27 ... ♖d8

Trying to squirm out! The queen has no shelter. On 27...♕g6, 28 ♖xe7 wins. Or 27...♕h4 28 ♖xf8+. Or 27...♗f6 28 ♕d6!.

28 ♕e4 ♕h4

I knew I was losing a piece, but just couldn't believe it. I had to play one more move to see if it was really true!

29 ♖f4 1-0

On 29...♕g3, 30 ♖xe7 is most efficient.

Game 19

Gudmundsson [Iceland] – **Fischer**

Reykjavik 1960

Grünfeld Defence

A long voyage home

Illustrating, rather subtly, how a weaker player may be lured to his own destruction, Fischer entices his opponent to abandon his passive though solid attempts to settle for a draw. Wrongly convinced that he holds an advantage, Gudmundsson, with 16 e4, gives Fischer the opportunity to launch a long, unclear sacrificial combination. Gudmundsson makes matters unexpectedly easy with 24 ♖b1, but the analysis accompanying the text shows the sacrifice to be sound in all variations. Fischer's performance from here on is typical in its clarity and forcefulness.

1 d4 ♘f6

2 ♘f3

Solid but passive.

2 ... d5

3 e3

Voluntarily locking in the bishop lacks energy and reduces White's options.

3 ... g6

4 c4

4 c3 would lead to the Colle System.

4 ... ♗g7

5 ♘c3 0-0

6 ♕b3

After 6 ♗e2 c5! it's difficult for White to equalise:

a) 7 0-0? cxd4 8 ♘xd4 ♘c6 9 cxd5 ♘xd5 10 ♘xd5 ♕xd5 11 ♗f3 ♕c4 12 ♘xc6 bxc6 and Black stands better; Aaron-Gligorić, Stockholm 1962.

b) 7 cxd5 ♘xd5 8 ♕b3 ♘xc3 9 bxc3 ♕c7 10 0-0 b6 11 a4 ♘c6 and again Black's better; Goglidze-Botvinnik, Moscow 1935.

c) 7 dxc5 ♕a5 8 cxd5 (if 8 0-0 dxc4 9 ♗xc4 ♕xc5) 8...♘xd5 9 ♕xd5 ♗xc3+ 10 ♗d2 (after 10 ♔f1 ♗g7 11 ♗d2 ♕c7 Black regains his pawn at will, with a strong attack) 10...♖d8! 11 ♗xc3 ♕xc3+ 12 bxc3 ♖xd5 with the superior ending (e.g. 13 ♖d1 ♖xc5 14 ♖d8+ ♔g7 15 0-0 ♘c6 16 ♖e8 b6).

6 ... e6

Another good build-up is 6...c6 followed by ...e6, ...b6, ...♗b7, ...♘bd7, ...c5, etc.

7 ♗e2 ♘c6

8 ♕c2

Probably best (Black threatened ...♘a5 gaining the two bishops). As Evans pointed out in *Trophy Chess* (in an analogous position): "8 cxd5 exd5 permits Black to solve the problem of his queen's bishop. He has the semi-open e-file and good squares for his pieces. It is now White who must fight for equality!"

8 ... dxc4

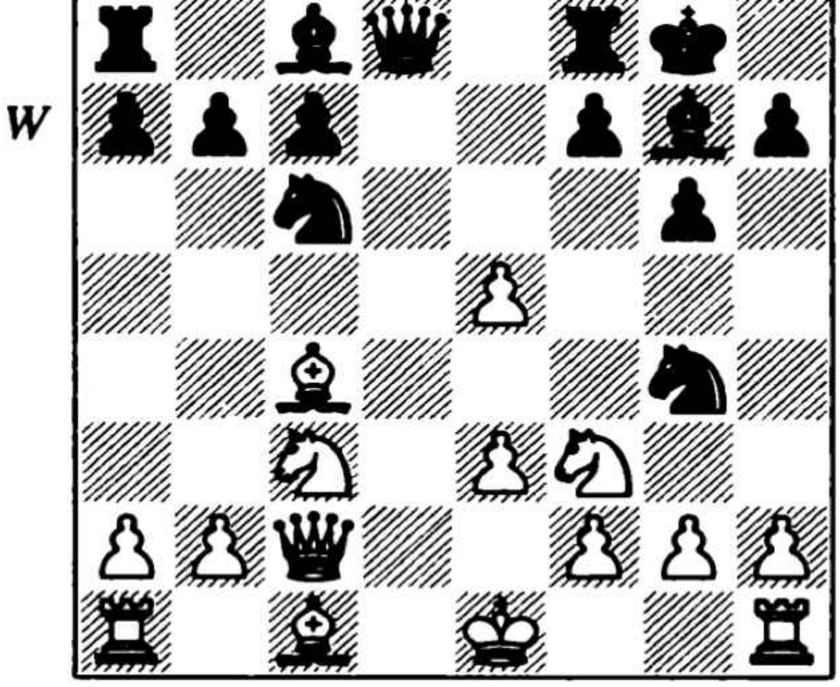
9 ♗xc4 e5!

10 dxe5

Also good is 10 ♘xe5 (if 10 d5? ♘a5) 10...♘xe5 11 dxe5 ♘g4 12 e6! (not 12 f4 ♘xe5! 13 fxe5? ♕h4+ 14 g3 ♕xc4, etc.) 12...♗xe6 13 ♗xe6 fxe6 14 0-0 =.

10 ... ♘g4 *(D)*

11 0-0



Stronger is 11 e6! ♗xe6 12 ♗xe6 fxe6 13 0-0 (13 ♕e4? ♘ce5! 14 ♘xe5? ♘xf2! 15 ♕c4 ♗xe5 16 ♕xe6+ ♖f7 17 ♕xe5 ♘d3+ wins for Black) and Black seems to have nothing better than a draw by perpetual after 13...♖xf3 14 gxf3 ♕h4 15 fxg4 ♕xg4+ 16 ♔h1 ♕f3+, etc.

11 ... ♘cxe5

12 ♘xe5 ♘xe5

13 ♗e2 c6

The chances are now equal.

14 f4

Apparently stronger is 14 e4 but after 14...♕h4! 15 h3 (if 15 f4 ♘g4) 15...g5! 16 f4 (or 16 ♘d1 f5 17 f4 ♘g6 18 fxg5 f4!) 16...gxf4 17 ♗xf4 (on 17 ♖xf4 ♕g3) 17...♔h8 Black has good prospects along the ventilated g-file.

14 ... ♘g4!

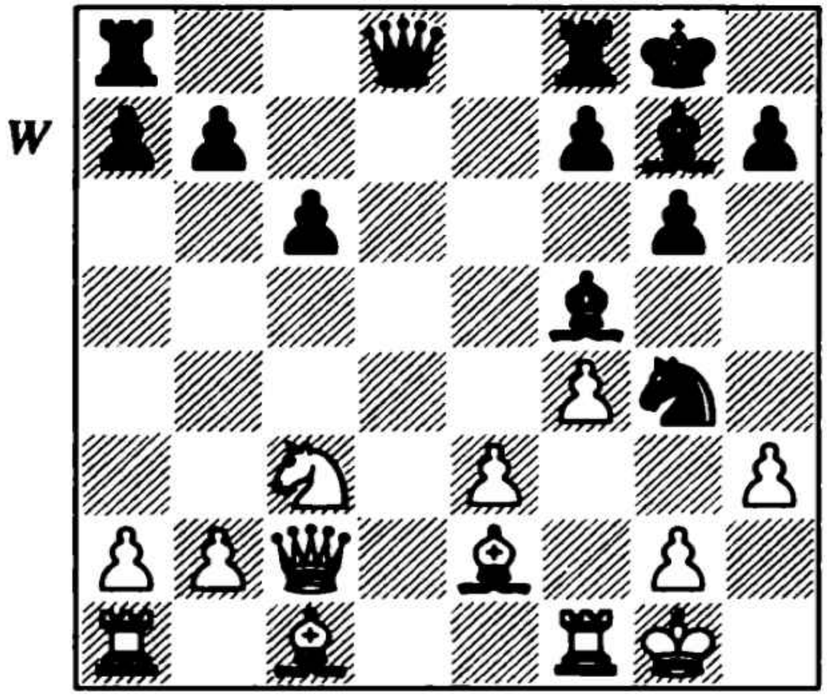
15 h3 ♗f5! *(D)*

White was doubtless expecting 15...♘f6 16 e4 with an ideal centre.

16 e4?

Provoking a powerful combination.

White should abandon his hopes in the centre and settle for 16 ♕b3



♘f6 17 ♕xb7 ♘e4! 18 ♕xc6 ♖c8 19 ♕a6 ♘xc3 20 bxc3 ♗xc3 21 ♗a3 ♗xa1 22 ♗xf8 ♗d4! 23 exd4 ♕xd4+ 24 ♔h1 ♔xf8. Black is better, but White has excellent drawing chances.

16 ... ♕d4+
17 ♔h1 ♘f2+
18 ♖xf2

All forced. Not 18 ♔h2 ♘xe4 removing a vital pawn.

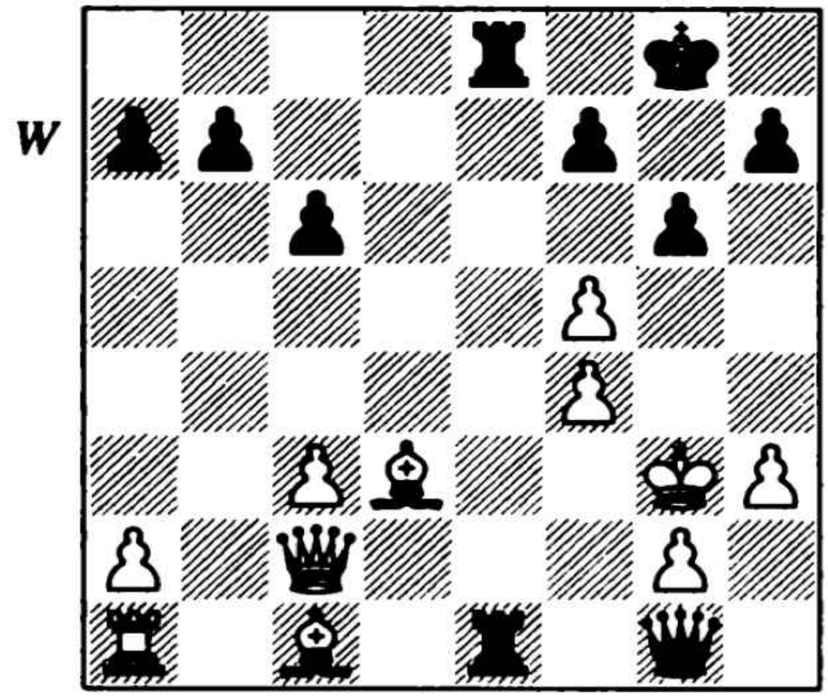
18 ... ♕xf2
19 exf5 ♗xc3!

A clean-cut line which reduces White's options. Inexact would be 19...♖fe8 20 ♘e4! ♕e1+ 21 ♔h2 gxf5 (if 21...♗d4 22 ♗e3! ♕xa1 23 ♗xd4) 22 ♘g3 and if 22...♗d4?, 23 ♗e3!.

20 bxc3 ♖ae8
21 ♗d3 ♖e1+
22 ♔h2 ♕g1+
23 ♔g3 ♖fe8 *(D)*

Just as complicated is 23...gxf5 24 ♗xf5 ♖fe8 25 ♗xh7+ ♔g7 26 ♕f5, etc.

24 ♖b1?



Also bad is 24 ♕f2 ♖8e3+! 25 ♗xe3 ♖xe3+ 26 ♕xe3 ♕xe3+.

The toughest defence is 24 fxg6! hxg6 and now:

a) 25 ♗xg6? ♖1e2! (not 25...♖8e2 26 ♗xf7+ ♔h8 27 ♕f5 ♖xg2+ 28 ♔h4 ♕f2+ 29 ♔h5 ♕f3+ 30 ♔h6! and White wins!) 26 ♗xf7+ ♔h8 27 ♕f5 ♖xg2+ 28 ♔h4 ♕e1+ 29 ♔h5 ♔g7! (threatening ...♖h8+) 30 ♗xe8 ♕xe8+ 31 ♔h4 ♕d8+ 32 ♕g5+ ♖xg5 33 fxg5 ♕d1 with an easy win for Black.

b) 25 ♖b1 ♖8e3+! 26 ♗xe3 (26 ♔g4 ♕h2 27 ♗xe3 leads to the same position) 26...♖xe3+ 27 ♔g4 (not 27 ♔h4? ♕h2 28 ♕f2 ♖xh3+!) 27...♕h2 28 ♕f2 (28 ♗xg6 ♕g3+ 29 ♔h5 ♕xf4! 30 ♗f5 ♖g3! 31 ♗g4 ♔g7 32 ♕c1 [32 ♔h4 ♖xg4+ 33 hxg4 ♕h2+ mates] 32...♖e3 wins) 28...♖xd3 (if 28...♖xh3!?, then 29 ♗xg6! fxg6 30 ♖h1! holds) 29 ♖b2! (29 ♖xb7 loses to 29...♖xh3! 30 ♖b8+ ♔h7 31 f5 ♖h6!) 29...♖xc3 30 ♖d2 and White has drawing chances even though a pawn behind.

24 ... gxf5

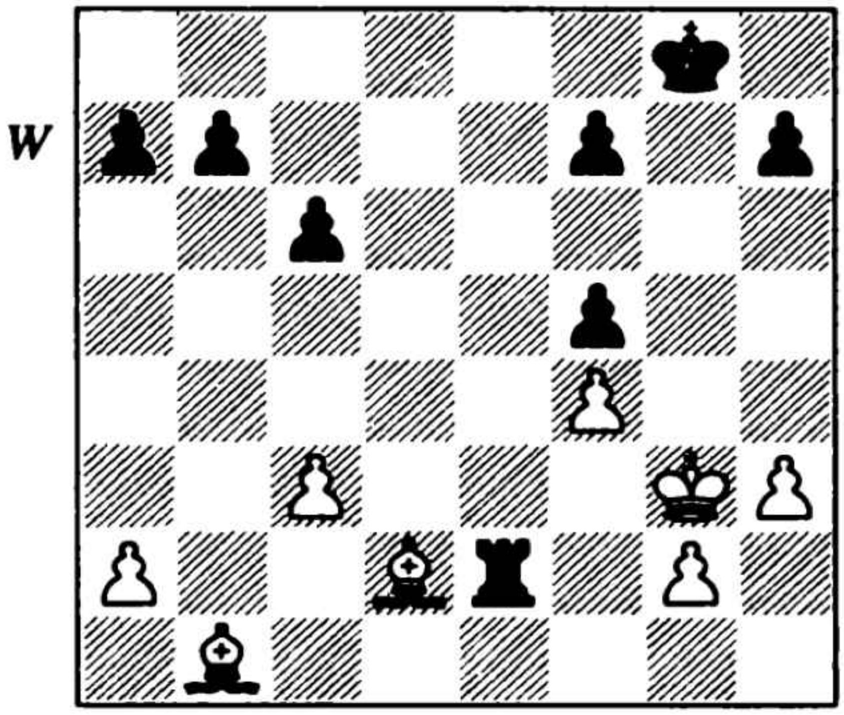
Threatening either ...♔h8 or ...♜8e6 with a devastating check to follow on the g-file.

25 ♗d2

25 ♗xf5 is no better; after 25...♜1e2 26 ♗xh7+ ♔h8 27 ♛f5 ♜xg2+ 28 ♔h4, 28...♜g7 (among others) wins.

25 ... ♜xb1
26 ♛xb1 ♛xb1
27 ♗xb1 ♜e2 *(D)*

This is what Gudmundsson overlooked. If now 28 ♗c1, 28...♜e1 picks off one of the bishops. So ...



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Game 20

Fischer – Euwe [Holland]

Leipzig OL 1960

Caro-Kann Defence

Theoretical scuffle

Former world champion, Dr. Max Euwe had for decades been considered one of the world's leading authorities on opening theory. His *Chess Archives* ranks with *Modern Chess Openings* as an indispensable source of reference. It is no small wonder, then, when he selects a risky but playable variation. Fischer, however, just a little better versed in its intricacies, introduces a nuance on move 15 which ruffles his opponent no end.

Fischer's method of dispatching his veteran adversary—an home grounds, as it were—is deceptively simple. After a mere eighteen moves the opening has become an ending and the duel is over. Euwe fights on, but to no avail.

1 e4 c6
2 d4 d5
3 exd5 cxd5

At that time I was convinced the Panov-Botvinnik Attack was the sharpest

5 ♘c3 ♘c6

In our game at Buenos Aires 1960, Ivkov played 5...e6 6 ♘f3 ♗e7 7 c5 0-0 8 ♗d3 b6 9 b4 bxc5 (better is 9...a5 10 ♘a4 ♘fd7!) 10 bxc5 ♘c6 11 0-0 ♗d7 12 h3 ♘e8 13 ♗f4 with a bind.

6 ♘f3

On Botvinnik's old 6 ♗g5 e6! (6...dxc4? 7 d5 ♘e5 8 ♕d4 is strong) 7 cxd5 exd5 8 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 9 ♘xd5 ♕d8 10 ♘c3 (if 10 ♗c4 ♗e6 11 ♕e2? b5!) 10...♕xd4 11 ♕xd4 ♘xd4 12 0-0-0 ♗c5 13 ♘a4 ♘e6 =.

6 ... ♗g4!?

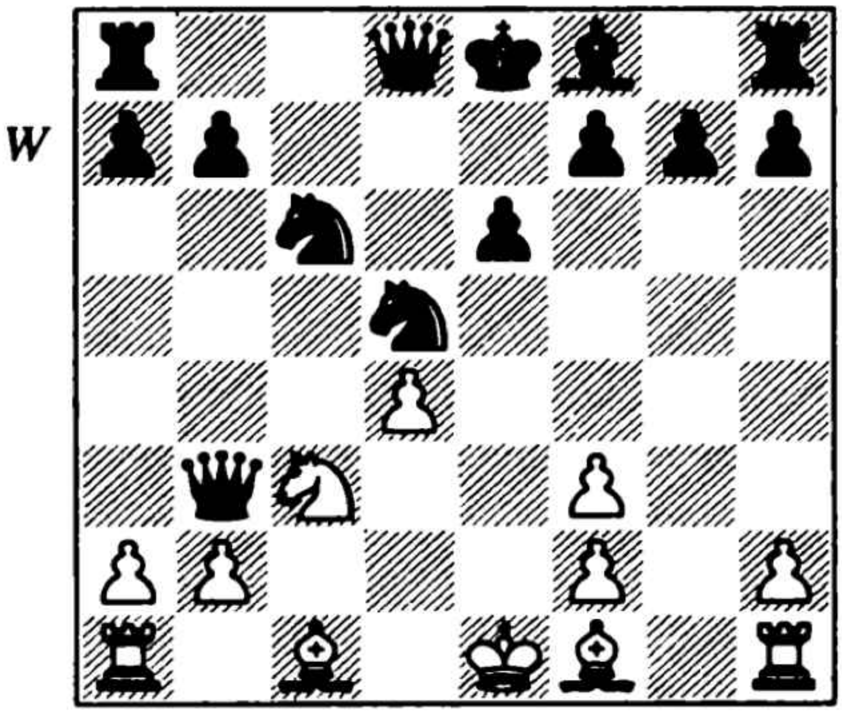
Risky but playable. 6...e6 is a safer alternative.

7 cxd5 ♘xd5

8 ♕b3 ♗xf3

9 gxf3 e6 *(D)*

On 9...♘db4!? 10 ♗e3 ♘xd4 11 ♗xd4 ♕xd4 12 ♗b5+ ♘c6 13 0-0 White gets a strong attack; Evans-Henin, Las Vegas Open 1965.



10 ♕xb7 ♘xd4

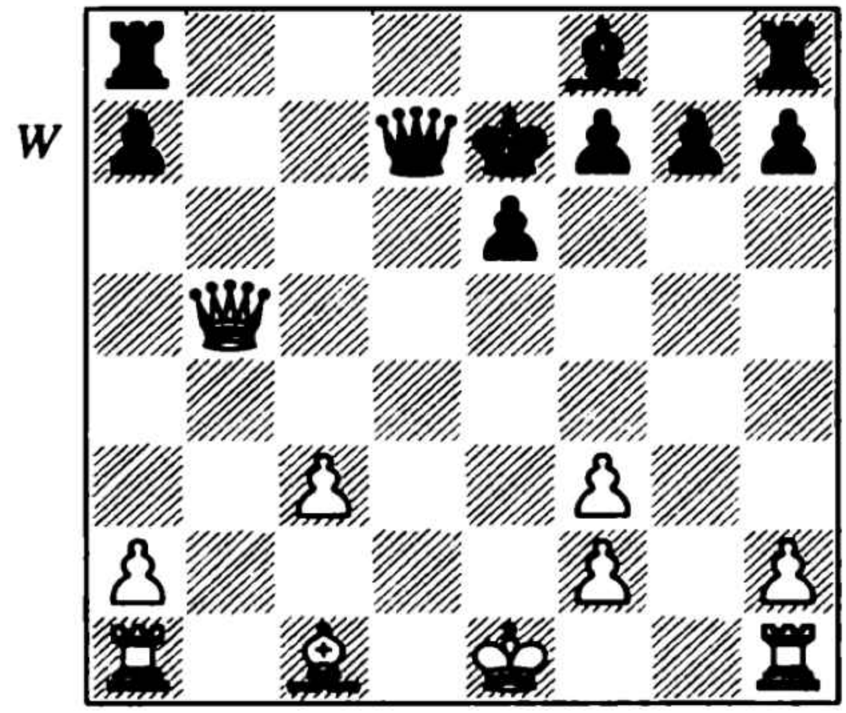
11 ♗b5+ ♘xb5

12 ♕c6+ ♔e7

13 ♕xb5 ♘xc3

An alternative is 13...♕d7 14 ♘xd5+ exd5 (14...♕xd5 15 ♕xd5 exd5 16 0-0 gives White good play against Black's isolated d- and a-pawns) 15 ♕b4+ (15 ♕e2+ ♔f6 16 h4 is winning for White, according to Evans) 15...♔e8 16 ♕d4 with a clear advantage.

14 bxc3 ♕d7 *(D)*



After 14...♕d5, 15 ♕xd5 exd5 16 ♖b1 gives White a slight edge.

15 ♖b1!

The innovation. Months before the game I had showed this line to Benko and he suggested this innocent-looking move. Upon looking deeper I found that, horrible as White's pawn structure may be, Black can't exploit it because he'll be unable to develop his kingside normally. It's the little quirks like this that could make life difficult for a chess machine.

15 ... ♖d8?

Also difficult is 15...♕xb5 16 ♖xb5 ♔d6! 17 ♖b7 f6 18 ♔e2 ♔c6 19 ♖f7 a5 20 ♗e3 with an enduring pull.

16 ♗e3 ♕xb5
17 ♖xb5 ♖d7
18 ♔e2

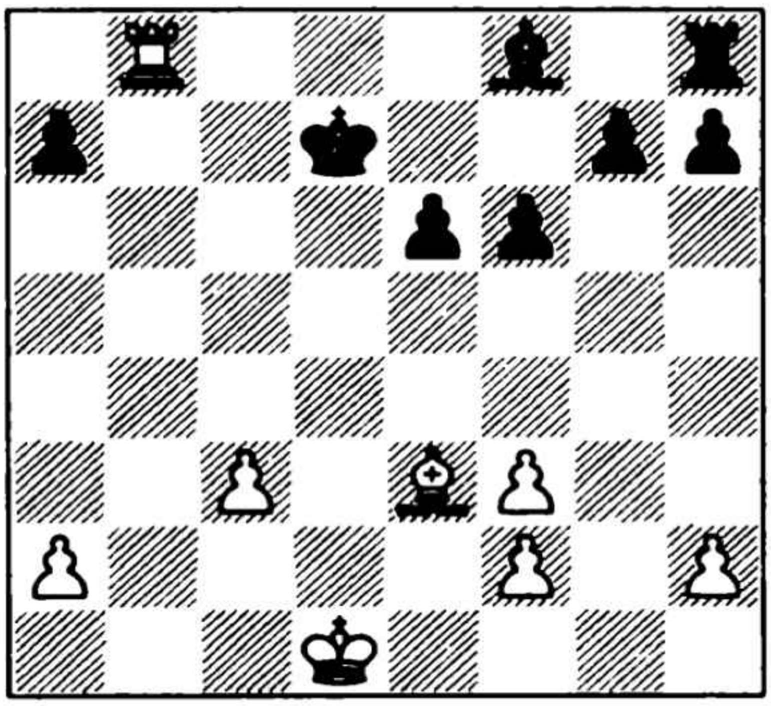
18 ♖a5 is unnecessary. White can win the a-pawn at his leisure.

18 ... f6
19 ♖d1!

In order to swap Black's only active piece.

19 ... ♖xd1
20 ♔xd1 ♔d7
21 ♖b8! *(D)*

21 ♗xa7 ♗d6 22 ♖b7+ ♔c6 23 ♖xg7 ♗xh2 would be hard to win. Now the threat is 22 ♗c5.



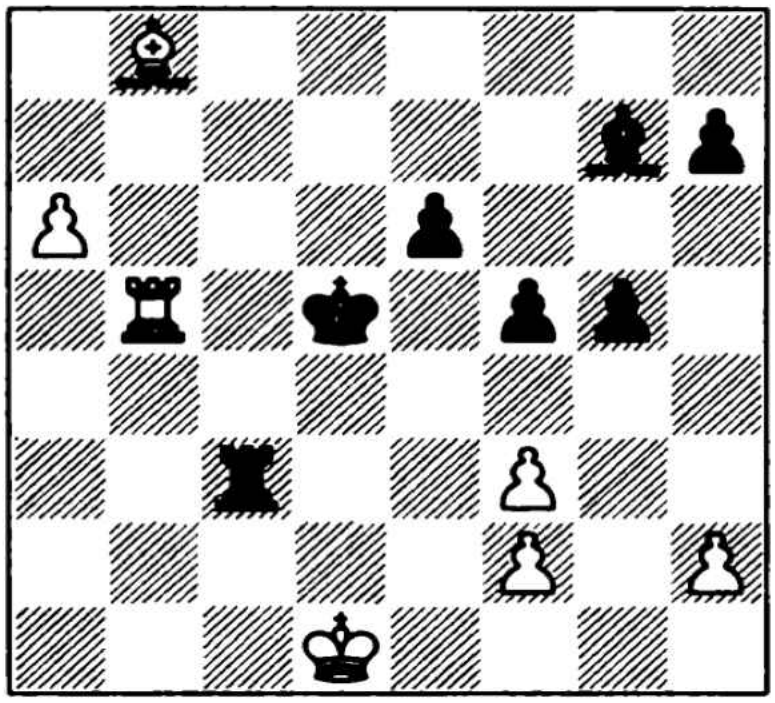
21 ... ♔c6
22 ♗xa7 g5

Striving to untangle the kingside.

23 a4 ♗g7
24 ♖b6+ ♔d5
25 ♖b7 ♗f8
26 ♖b8

Still trying to decide how to squeeze the most out of it.

26 ... ♗g7
27 ♖b5+ ♔c6
28 ♖b6+ ♔d5
29 a5 f5
30 ♗b8! ♖c8
31 a6 ♖xc3
32 ♖b5+ *(D)*



32 ... ♔c4

After the game Euwe showed me a cute trap he might have played for and almost fainted when I fell into it! The line arises after 32...♔c6 33 ♖a5 ♗d4 and he asked, "What do you do now?" I looked a few seconds and played 34 ♗e5? whereupon he uncorked 34...♖c5! which leads to a draw. Upon reconsideration, however, simply 34 ♔e2 wins. It's these titbits that you remember best.

33 ♖b7 ♗d4
34 ♖c7+ ♔d3
35 ♖xc3+ ♔xc3
36 ♗e5 1-0

He can't stop the a-pawn.

Leipzig OL 1960

King's Indian Defence

A queen for the king

Letelier transgresses opening principles by neglecting his development in order to win material. Pugnaciously, he mixes it up with the unorthodox 5 e5 and proceeds to snatch pawns. But his judgement proves to be wrong.

Striking from behind the lines, Fischer causes White's over-extended centre to crumble. Letelier, busily engaged on a material hunt, neglects to safeguard his rear, leaving his king marooned in the centre. Fischer rapidly encircles the hapless monarch and, with a startling queen sacrifice, induces abdication.

1 d4 ♘f6
2 c4 g6
3 ♘c3 ♗g7
4 e4 0-0
5 e5

Weak. Letelier snapped at the chance to take me 'out of the book', but this premature advance leaves White with all the responsibility of holding his overextended centre pawns.

5 ... ♘e8
6 f4 d6

Weaker is 6...c5 7 dxc5 ♕a5 8 ♗e3 f6? 9 ♘f3 fxe5 10 fxe5 ♘c6 11 ♗e2 ♘c7 12 0-0 ♘e6 13 ♘d5 ♕d8 14 ♕d2, etc.; Koralev-Roshal, USSR 1962.

7 ♗e3

7 ♘f3 is safer, though White can no longer lay claim to any kind of initiative. My game with Schoene in the US Junior Ch 1957 continued: 7...dxe5 8 fxe5 (better is 8 dxe5) 8...♗g4 9 ♗e2 c5 10 ♗f4 cxd4 11 ♕xd4 ♘c6 12 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 soon winning a pawn.

7 ... c5!

"Now the artificially constructed white centre begins to crumble." (Lombardy).

8 dxc5 ♘c6

"Black rapidly develops his pieces while White nurtures his own dreams with ill-gotten gains." (Lombardy).

9 cxd6

White tries to compensate for his

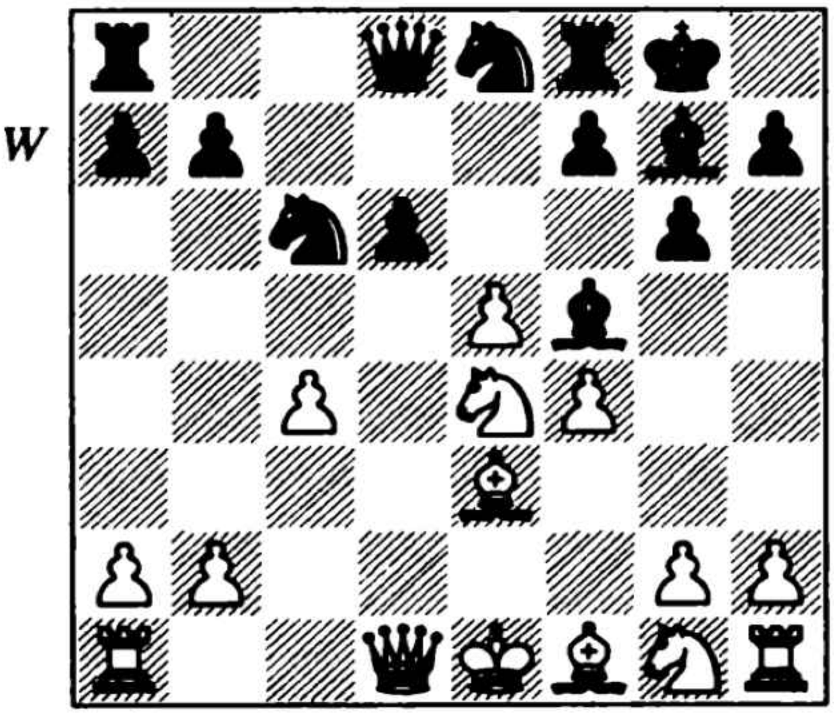
lack of development by continuing to snatch material. Instead he should be seeking to return the pawn in the least damaging way (by keeping the lines closed). Better is 9 ♘f3 ♗g4 10 ♗e2.

9 ... exd6

10 ♘e4

"More realistic would have been 10 ♘f3." (Lombardy). I intended 10...♗g4. After the text White no longer has time to castle.

10 ... ♗f5! *(D)*



11 ♘g3?

A better chance is 11 ♘xd6 ♘xd6 12 ♕xd6 ♕xd6 13 exd6 ♗xb2 14 ♖d1 ♘b4! (threatening ...♗c2) 15 ♔f2 (if 15 ♘e2 ♗c2 16 ♖d2 ♘d3+) 15...♘xa2 16 ♘e2 (if 16 ♖d2?, then 16...♘c3!) 16...a5. Black is better but White may have drawing resources.

11 ... ♗e6

I also considered 11...♕c7 12 ♘xf5 gxf5. White's centre must collapse.

By now White is more than willing to return the pawn in order to catch up in development.

12 ... ♕c7

Also playable is 12...dxe5 13 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 14 ♗c5 exf4. But I wanted to fracture him in the middle game.

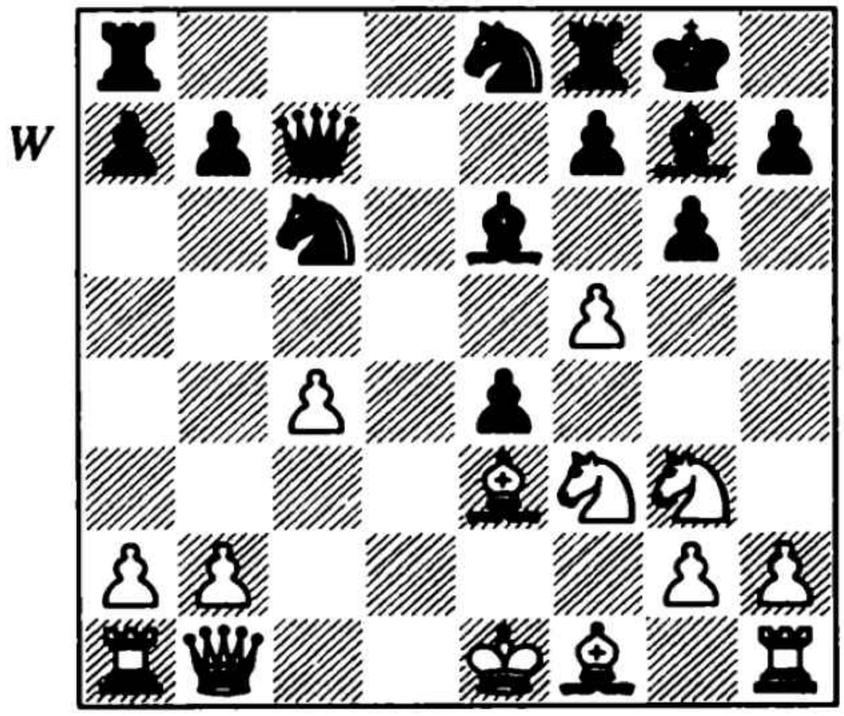
13 ♕b1

Continuing his 'attack'. On 13 ♗e2 dxe5 14 ♗c5 ♕a5+ 15 b4 ♘xb4 16 ♗xf8 ♔xf8! 17 0-0 exf4 18 ♘e4 ♗f5 is overwhelming. And on 13 ♕c2 (in order to prepare 0-0-0) 13...dxe5 14 f5 gxf5 15 ♘xf5 ♘b4 16 ♕b3 (if 16 ♕b1 ♗xf5 17 ♕xf5 ♘d6 18 ♕b1 ♘xc4 19 ♘g5 f5 20 ♘e6 ♕c6 21 ♗xc4 ♕xc4 22 ♘xf8 ♖xf8 with a winning attack) 16...♗xf5 17 ♕xb4 ♘f6! is strong, e.g. 18 ♕c5 ♕b8 (threatening ...♘g4).

13 ... dxe5

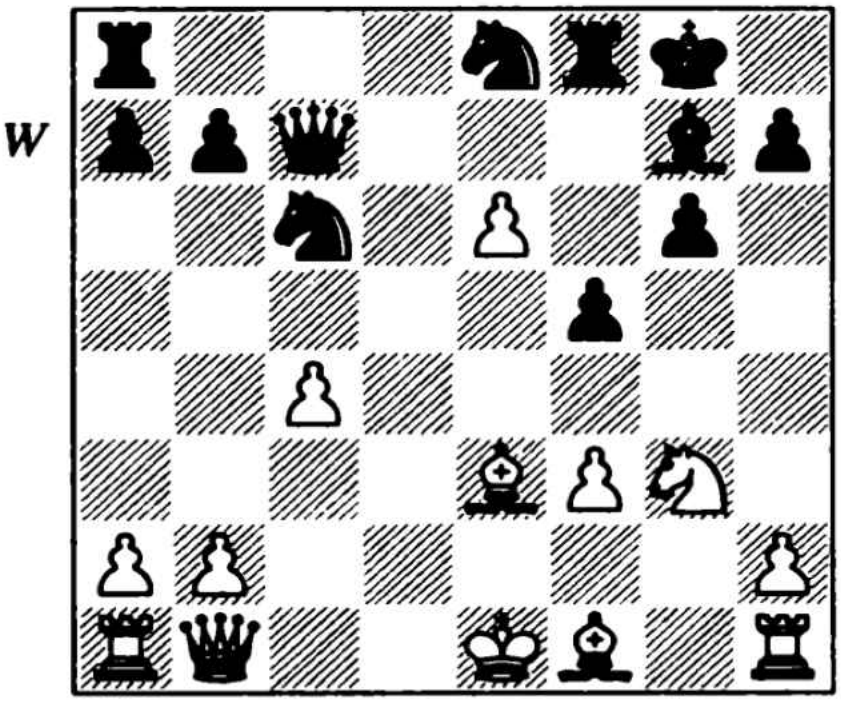
14 f5 e4! *(D)*

"An unexpected shot that sends White spinning." (Lombardy).



On 15 ♕xe4 gxf5! 16 ♘xf5? (if 16 ♕h4 ♗xb2), 16...♕a5+ wins a piece.

15 ... exf3
16 gxf3 f5! *(D)*



"The pawn on e6 can be ignored in favour of the attack." (Lombardy). The threat is ...f4.

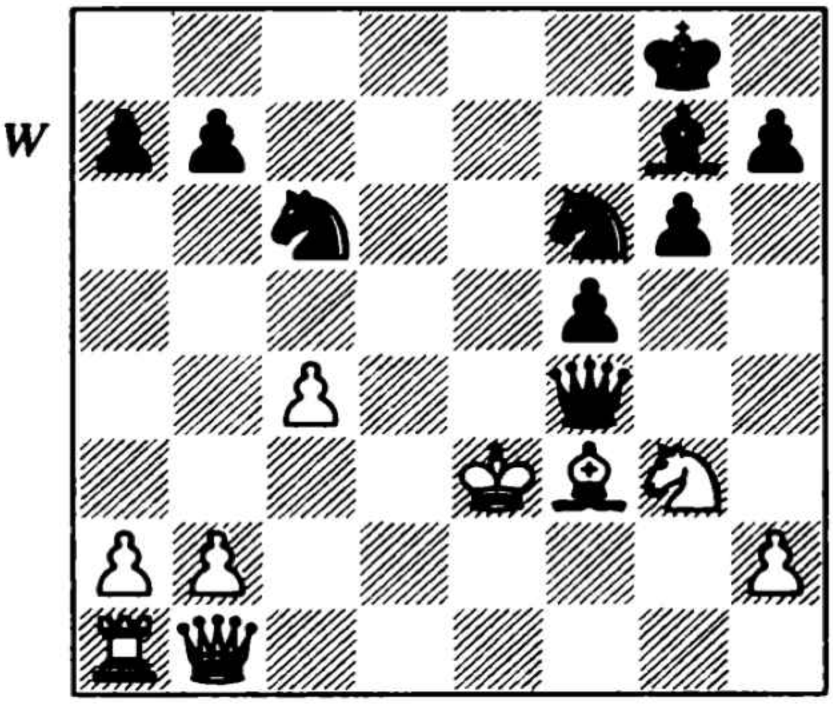
17 f4 ♘f6
18 ♗e2 ♖fe8
19 ♔f2 ♖xe6

Finally Black regains the pawn with interest.

20 ♖e1 ♖ae8
21 ♗f3

"Anyone interested in sui-mate (helpmate) problems?" (Lombardy).

21 ... ♖xe3!
22 ♖xe3 ♖xe3
23 ♔xe3 ♕xf4+! *(D)*



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Astonishingly, 24 ♔xf4 ♗h6 is mate! Or 24 ♔f2 ♘g4+ 25 ♔g2 ♘e3+ 26 ♔f2 ♘d4 27 ♕h1 ♘g4+ 28 ♔f1 ♘xf3 with a winning attack for Black.

Game 22

Szabo [Hungary] – **Fischer**

Leipzig OL 1960

King's Indian Defence

Bad judgement

Once a contender for the title, Szabo's performances nowadays are spotty and unpredictable. Here, with breathtaking bluntness, he attempts to wipe Fischer from the board. In the process he leaves himself wide open on the dark

squares. Fischer promptly invades on the queenside, by means of a curious queen manoeuvre, while Szabo, preoccupied with his own kingside attack, fails to realise the danger in time. 21...♖e3! is the blow that ends all effective resistance. Rather than fight on against hopeless odds, Szabo resigns three moves later.

1 d4 ♘f6
2 c4 g6
3 ♘c3 ♗g7
4 e4 0-0
5 ♗g5

For 5 e5 see Game 21. For 5 ♘f3 see Games 7, 28 and 30.

5 ... d6

After 5...h6, 6 ♗e3! allows White to set up a Sämisch formation (6...d6 7 f3) where the inevitable ♕d2 will be more effective than usual.

6 ♕d2

Better is simply 6 ♗e2 c5 7 d5 e6 8 ♘f3 h6 9 ♗h4 exd5 10 cxd5 g5 11 ♗g3 ♘h5 (not 11...b5? 12 ♘d2!) leading to a double-edged struggle; Larsen-Fischer, Santa Monica 1966.

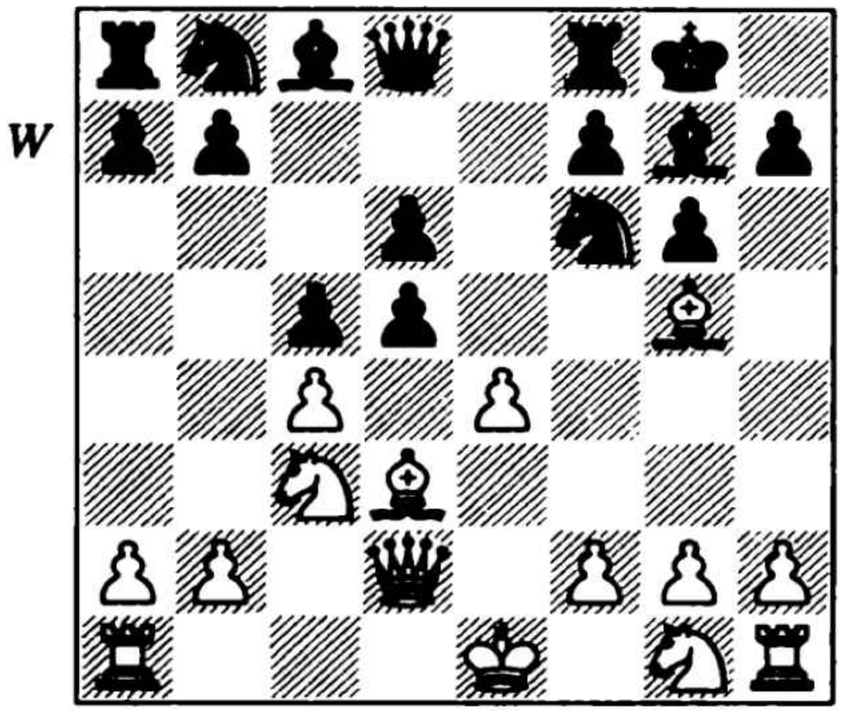
6 ... c5!
7 d5

Instead 7 ♘f3 cxd4 8 ♘xd4 ♘c6 is equal, whilst 7 dxc5 dxc5 8 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 9 e5 ♘g4 10 f4 f6 is better for Black.

7 ... e6
8 ♗d3

8 dxe6 ♗xe6 9 ♘f3 ♘c6 10 ♗e2 ♗g4! 11 0-0 ♖e8 12 ♕f4 ♗xf3 13 ♗xf3 ♘d4 14 ♖ad1 ♖e5 leads to equality, as in Evans-Gligorić, Dallas 1957.

White has no advantageous way to recapture.



9 ♘xd5

a) 9 exd5 ♘bd7 10 f4 (to stop ...♘e5) 10...h6 11 ♗h4 ♖e8+ 12 ♘ge2 ♘e4! 13 ♗xd8 ♘xd2 14 ♗c7 ♗xc3 15 bxc3 ♘e4 16 ♗xe4 ♖xe4 17 ♗xd6 ♘b6 18 ♔f2 ♗g4! with a promising ending.

b) 9 cxd5 a6! 10 f4 (10 a4 is met by 10...♕a5 threatening ...b5) 10...h6 11 ♗h4 ♘xe4! 12 ♗xd8 ♘xd2 13 ♗c7 ♗xc3 14 bxc3 ♘e4! 15 ♗xe4 ♖e8, etc.

In this opening variation Black must play sharply. White has a space advantage, but he temporarily lags in development.

9 ... ♗e6

Releasing the tension and, by forcing White to recapture with a pawn, eliminating the backward d-pawn on an open file.

11 exd5

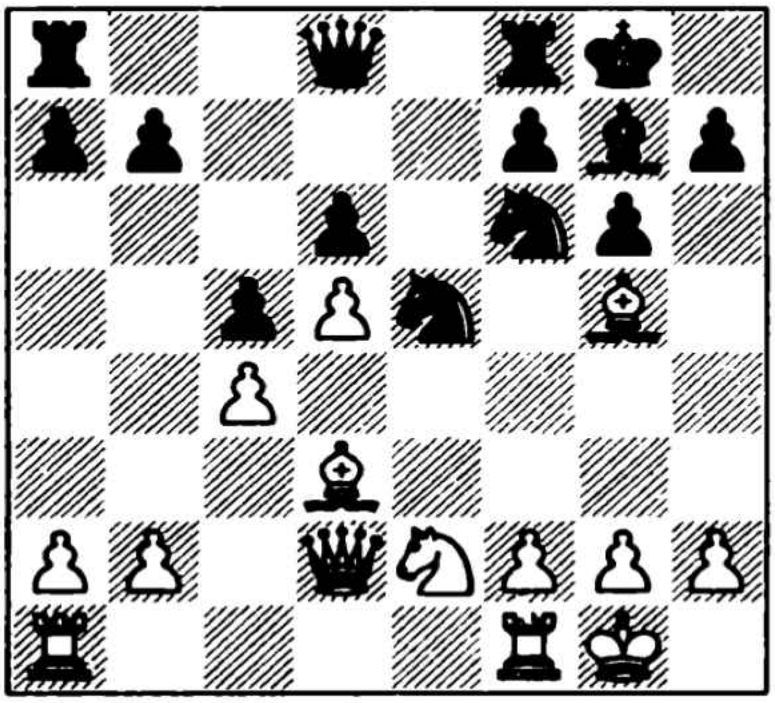
Or 11 cxd5 c4! 12 ♗c2 ♘bd7 13 0-0 ♘c5 14 ♘c3 b5!.

11 ... ♘bd7

12 0-0

Not 12 f4 ♕e8! 13 ♕c2? (to stop ...♘e4) 13...♘g4! invading on the weak dark squares (notably e3).

12 ... ♘e5 *(D)*



13 f4?

After 13 ♘c3 the game is even.

This lemon, weakening e3 and e4, came as a pleasant surprise. Szabo misjudges White's attacking prospects.

13 ... ♘xd3

14 ♕xd3 h6

15 ♗h4 ♖e8

16 ♖ae1

16 ♘c3 is the best of a bad choice, though 16...♕b6! threatening ...♘g4 creates problems for White. 17 h3 allows 17...♘h5!, increasing the pressure on White's game.

16 ... ♕b6!

17 ♗xf6

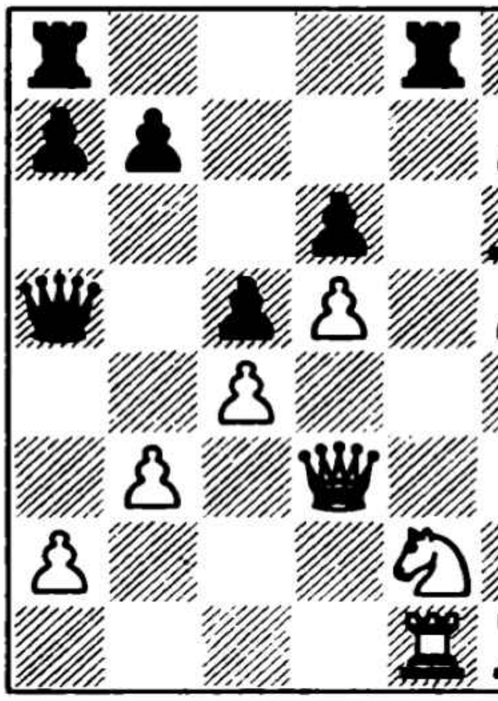
13 b3 ♘e4! gives Black a bind.

17 ... ♗xf6

18 f5 g5

19 b3 ♕a5! *(D)*

A nettlesome manoeuvre!



20 ♖c1?

20 a4 loses to 20...♗d4+ 21 ♔h1 (not 21 ♘xd4? ♖xe1) 21...♖e3 22 ♕d1 ♖ae8 and the e-file pin is decisive. The best defence is 20 ♕b1!.

20 ... ♕xa2

21 ♖c2 ♖e3!

22 ♕xe3 ♕xc2

23 ♔h1 a5

24 h4 a4

0-1

White's pawns fall like ripe apples. I'll never forget the disgusted look on Szabo's face as he took his king and just sort of shoved it gently to the centre of the board, indicating his intention to resign.

Fischer – Tal [USSR]

Leipzig OL 1960

French Defence

No holds barred

Their first encounter after Tal became world champion proves to be an old-fashioned slugfest. Typically aggressive, Fischer rapidly achieves a winning bind, but unwisely permits Tal to touch off 'a dazzling array of fireworks' with 14...♘xe5. The struggle see-saws for seven moves before settling in a perpetual check.

The quality of this confrontation left little doubt that, in time, Fischer would yet take Tal's measure. He did just that less than a year later, after Tal had lost his return match with Botvinnik (Game 32). Reading Tal's palm, Fischer predicted: "The next world champion will be ... Bobby Fischer!"

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♘c3 ♗b4
4 e5 c5
5 a3 ♗a5

A dubious alternative to the usual 5...♗xc3+ (see Game 24).

6 b4!

Alekhine's recommendation.

6 ... cxd4

6...cxb4 7 ♘b5 yields a potent attack.

7 ♕g4 ♘e7

After 7...♔f8 8 bxa5 dxc3, 9 a4! followed by 10 ♗a3+ is strong (Liliental and Zagoriansky).

8 bxa5

Also good is 8 ♘b5.

8 ... dxc3
9 ♕xg7 ♖g8
10 ♕xh7 ♘bc6

On 10...♘d7 11 ♘f3 ♕c7 12 ♗b5 a6 13 ♗xd7+ ♗xd7 14 0-0 d4!? (*Archives*), 15 ♘xd4 ♕xe5 16 ♕d3 is better for White.

11 ♘f3 *(D)*

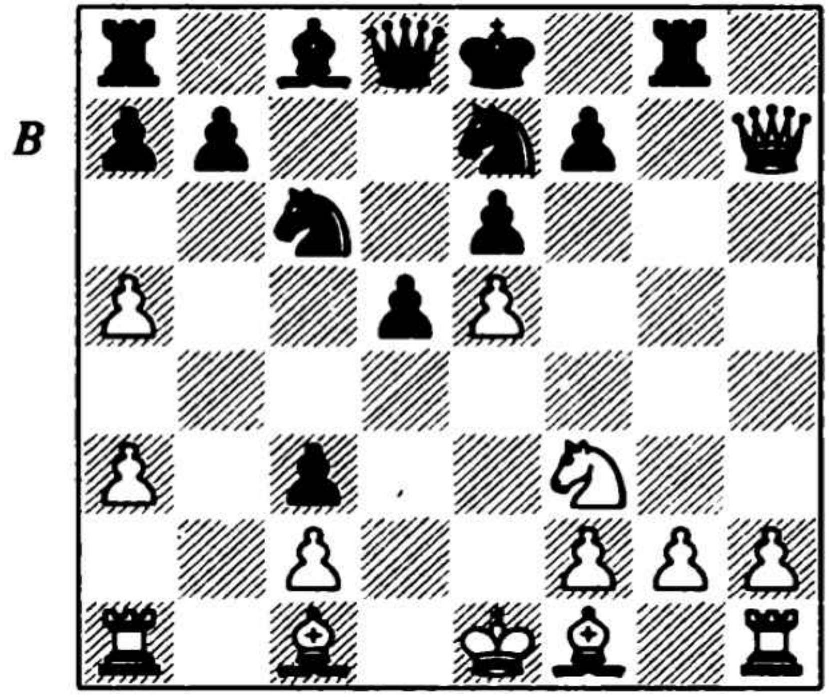
11 f4 bolsters the centre but shuts in the queen's bishop and weakens the dark squares.

11 ... ♕c7

On 11...♕xa5, 12 ♘g5! ♖f8 13 f4 (followed by the advance of the h-pawn) ties Black up.

12 ♗b5!

Harmoniously pursuing development without losing time. Also



playable is 12 ♗f4 ♗d7 13 ♗e2 0-0-0 14 ♕d3 ♕xa5 15 0-0 ♖g4 16 ♗g3; Unzicker-Dückstein, Zurich 1959.

12 ... ♗d7

Not 12...♖xg2 13 ♔f1! ♖g8 14 ♖g1! ♖xg1+ 15 ♔xg1 and Black's king remains hemmed in the centre while White merely marches his h-pawn to victory.

13 0-0

Unsound is 13 ♗xc6? ♗xc6 14 0-0 d4! 15 ♘g5 ♕xe5 16 ♕xf7+ ♔d7 with advantage for Black.

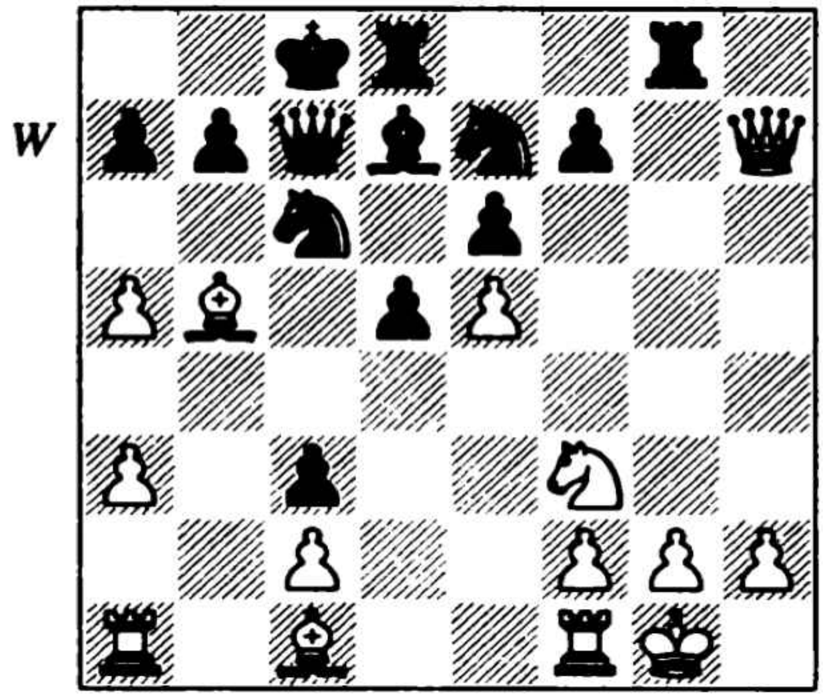
13 ... 0-0-0 *(D)*

After the game Petrosian suggested 13...♘xe5, but 14 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 15 ♗xd7+ ♔xd7 16 ♕d3! keeps White on top (if 16...♕e4?, 17 ♕xe4 dxe4 18 f3! wins a pawn).

14 ♗g5?

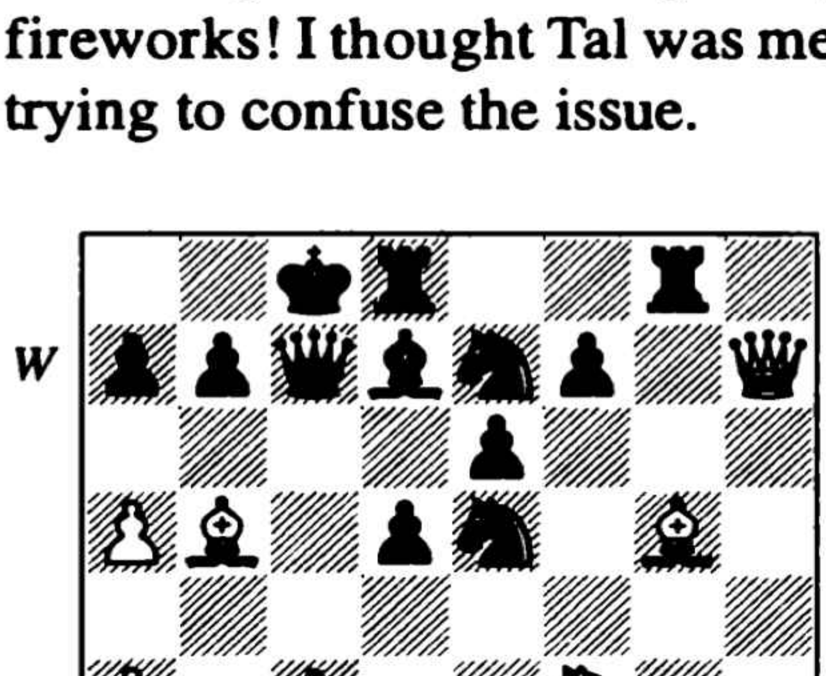
I simply underestimated the force of Tal's reply.

Correct is 14 ♗xc6! ♗xc6 (if 14...♕xc6, 15 ♗g5 d4 16 h4! or 14...♘xc6 15 ♖e1 followed by ♗g5 and h4 with a decisive bind) 15 ♕xf7 d4 (unsound is 15...♖xg2+!? 16 ♔xg2 d4 17 ♔g1 ♖g8+ 18 ♘g5) 16 ♕xe6+ ♗d7 (16...♔b8 17 ♘g5 is hopeless for Black) 17 ♕xe7 ♖xg2+ 18 ♔xg2 ♗h3+ 19 ♔xh3 ♕xe7 20 ♗g5 and White soon consolidates to victory.



14 ... ♘xe5! *(D)*

Setting off a dazzling array of fireworks! I thought Tal was merely trying to confuse the issue.



15 ♘xe5

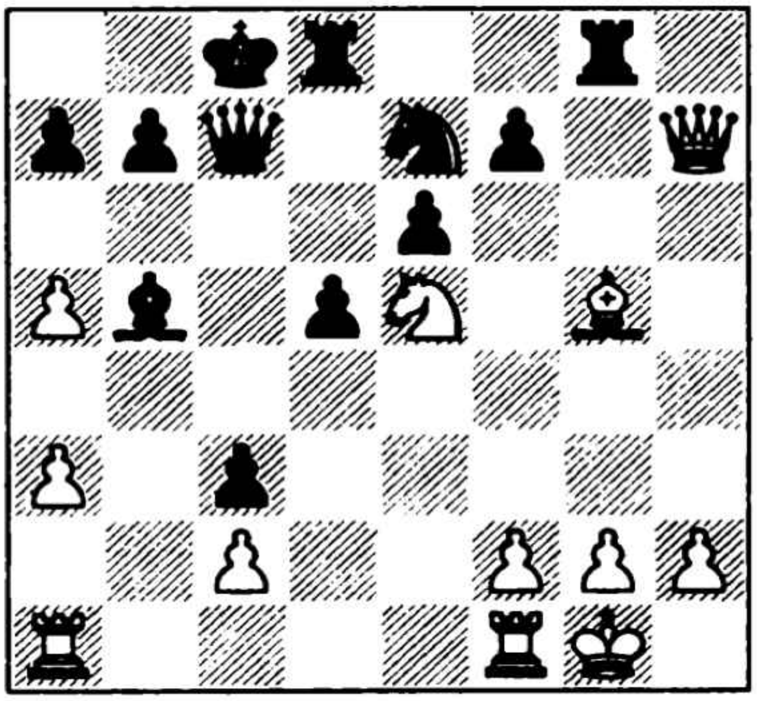
Originally I'd intended 15 ♗xd7+ but saw that after 15...♖xd7 16 ♘xe5 (if 16 ♗xe7 ♘xf3+ 17 ♔h1, then

17...♕xh2+!) 16...♕xe5 17 ♗xe7 ♖h8! Black regains his piece with greater activity: e.g. 18 ♖ae1 ♖xh7 19 ♖xe5 ♖xe7 and the compact centre pawns far outweigh White's passed h-pawn.

15 ♗xe7? is not playable in view of 15...♘xf3+ 16 ♔h1 ♖h8!.

15 ... ♗xb5 *(D)*

W



Playing for a win. After 15...♕xe5 16 ♗xe7 ♖h8, 17 ♖fe1 (17 ♖ae1? loses to 17...♕b8!) 17...♕xe1+ 18 ♖xe1 ♖xh7 19 ♗xd8 ♔xd8 (weak is 19...♗xb5 20 ♗f6!) 20 ♗xd7 ♔xd7 21 ♖e3! bails White out.

16 ♘xf7

White could still have maintained some tension with 16 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 (but not 16...♕xe5? 17 ♖fe1) 17 ♖fe1, etc.

16 ... ♗xf1!

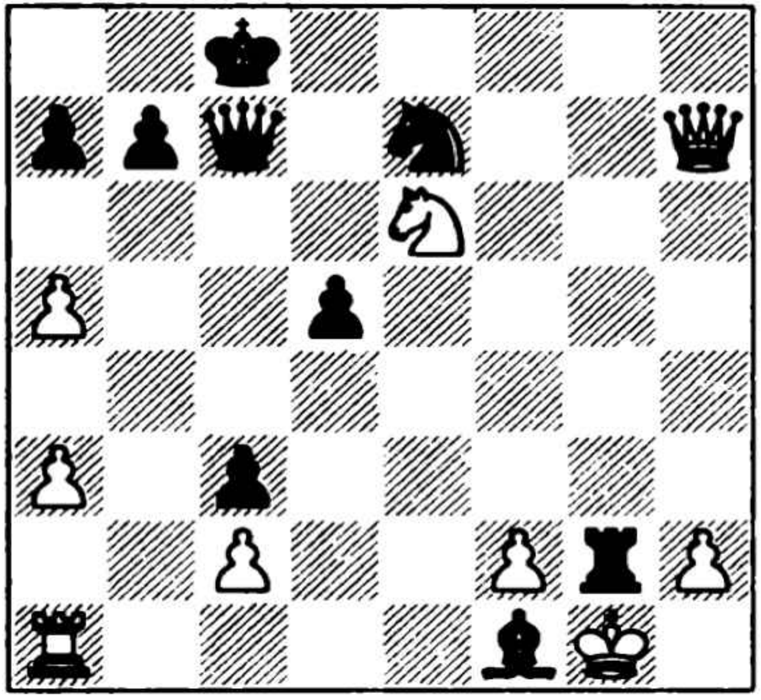
16...♖df8 17 ♖fb1 ♗c6 18 ♘d6+! ♕xd6 19 ♕xe7 is about equal.

17 ♘xd8 ♖xg5

18 ♘xe6 ♖xg2+! *(D)*

19 ♔h1!

W



The saving move. Not 19 ♔xf1? ♖xh2! 20 ♕f7 (20 ♘xc7 drops a piece after 20...♖xh7) 20...♖h1+!, which produces a winning attack from nowhere!

19 ... ♕e5

On 19...♕c4 20 ♕xe7 ♖g8, 21 ♘f4! holds nicely, e.g. 21...♕xf4? 22 ♕e6+ ♔c7 23 ♕xg8.

20 ♖xf1 ♕xe6

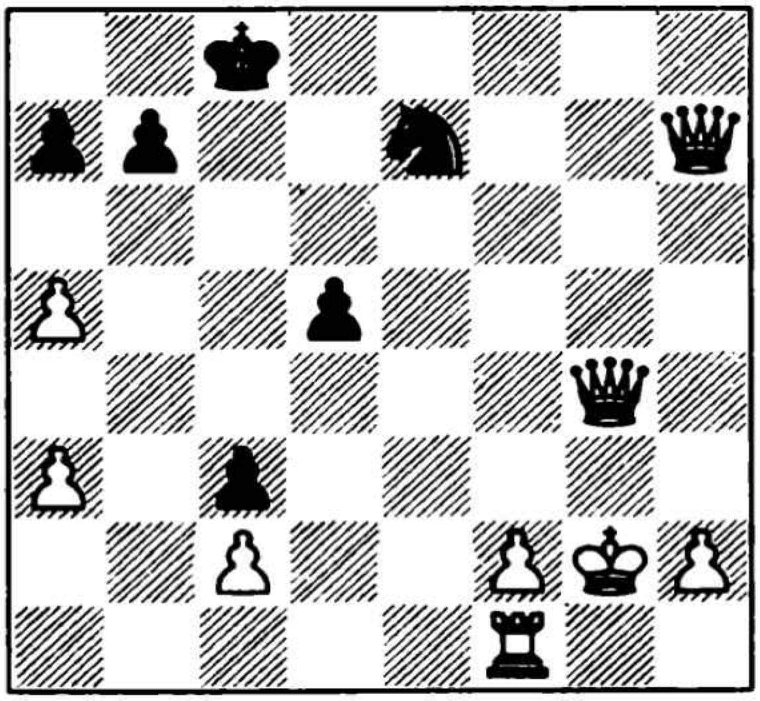
On 20...♖g6, 21 ♕xe7 ♖xe6 22 ♕f8+ ♖e8 23 ♕f3 is in White's favour.

21 ♔xg2 ♕g4+ *(D)*

½-½

Black has a perpetual check.

W



Asking for trouble

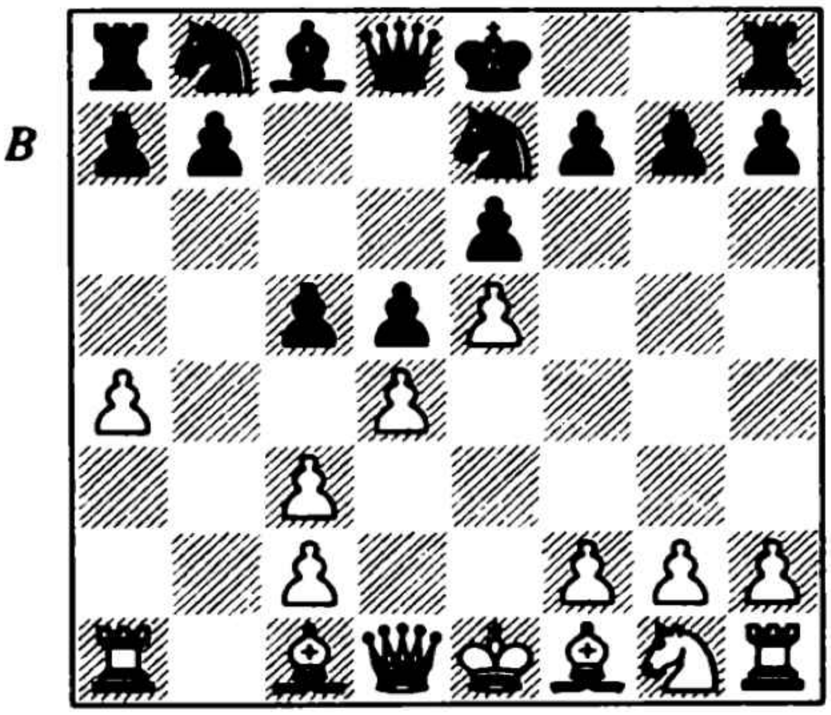
The Winawer Variation has given Fischer consistent trouble. He has had the utmost difficulty cracking Black's tortoise-like shell; even his successes are unconvincing. Maintaining the same line of attack year after year has provided his opponents with ample opportunity to sharpen their defences.

Darga's 12...f6 obliges Fischer, in order to get something out of the opening, to speculate on a pawn sacrifice (13 ♗a3!?). Though Darga's reaction may not be ideal, he proceeds sensibly and equalises. Underestimating Fischer's chances, however, he falls prey to a scintillating middlegame attack. And so, once again, by virtue of his native ability, Fischer avoids the retribution that is the usual price for failing to secure an advantage in the opening.

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♘c3 ♗b4
4 e5 c5
5 a3 ♗xc3+

For 5...♗a5 see Game 23.

6 bxc3 ♘e7
7 a4 *(D)*



Smyslov's favourite, largely responsible for Botvinnik's giving up the Winawer Variation. Sharper is 7 ♕g4. I felt that Black's carapace could be cracked only by positional means, but my results have been somewhat disheartening.

7 ... ♕c7

More usual is 7...♘bc6 8 ♘f3 ♕a5 9 ♕d2 (after 9 ♗d2 ♗d7 10 ♗e2 c4 11 h4!? f6 12 h5 fxe5 13 h6 gxh6 14 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 15 dxe5 0-0-0 16 ♖xh6 ♘g6 Black has secured an advantage; Fischer-Padevsky, Varna OL 1962) 9...♗d7 10 ♗d3 and now Black has two main continuations:

a) 10...c4 11 ♗e2 f6 12 ♗a3 0-0-0 (if 12...♘g6 13 0-0 0-0-0 14 ♗d6 White keeps the edge; Fischer-Uhlmann, Buenos Aires 1960) 13 0-0 ♘f5 14 ♖fe1 ♗e8 15 g4!? ♘fe7 16 ♗f1 ♗d7 = Fischer-Weinstein, US Ch 1960/1.

b) 10...f6! 11 0-0 fxe5 12 ♘xe5 (no better is 12 dxe5 as Smyslov tried against Uhlmann at Havana, 1964) 12...♘xe5 13 dxe5 0-0 14 c4 ♕xd2 15 ♗xd2 ♗c6 = Fischer-Uhlmann, Stockholm 1962.

I may yet be forced to admit that the Winawer is sound. But I doubt it! The defence is anti-positional and weakens the kingside.

8 ♘f3 b6

The idea is to eliminate the bad bishop with ...♗a6. An alternative is 8...♗d7 9 ♗d3 ♘bc6.

9 ♗b5+! ♗d7

More radical is 8...♔f8!? 9 ♗d3 ♗a6.

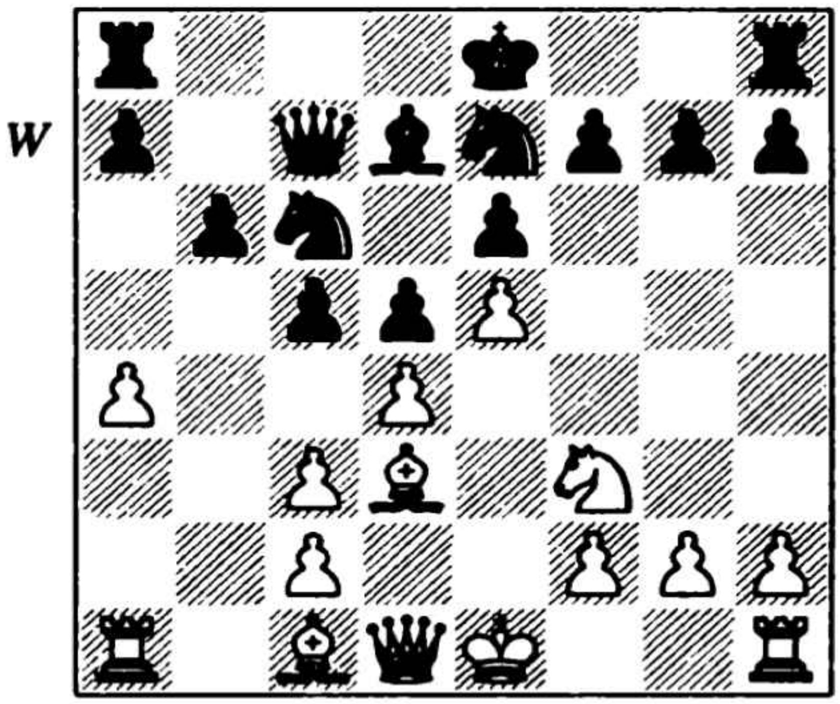
On 9...♘ec6 (after 9...♘bc6 Black can no longer enforce ...♗a6), 10 0-0 ♗a6 11 ♘g5 h6 12 ♘h3 is in White's favour.

10 ♗d3

After the continuation 10 0-0 ♗xb5 11 axb5 a5 12 ♘g5 h6 13 ♘h3 ♘d7 14 ♘f4 0-0!, as in Ivkov-R. Byrne, Sousse IZ 1967, Black has no problems.

10 ... ♘bc6 *(D)*

Black has gained a tempo, but whether his pawn belongs on b6 is a moot point.



11 0-0 c4

Not 11...0-0? 12 ♗xh7+! ♔xh7 13 ♘g5+, etc.

12 ♗e2 f6

13 ♗a3!?

Keeping tension in the centre at the cost of a pawn. 13 ♖e1 is solid but less aggressive. I tried this same pawn sac against Mednis in the 1962/3 US Championship with the slight but significant difference that Black's b-pawn was still on b7. The sac may well have been unsound in that game.

13 ... fxe5

Mednis declined and castled kingside, but after 14 ♖e1! got a cramped game (14...fxe5 is met by 15 ♘xe5! keeping the e-file open).

14 dxe5

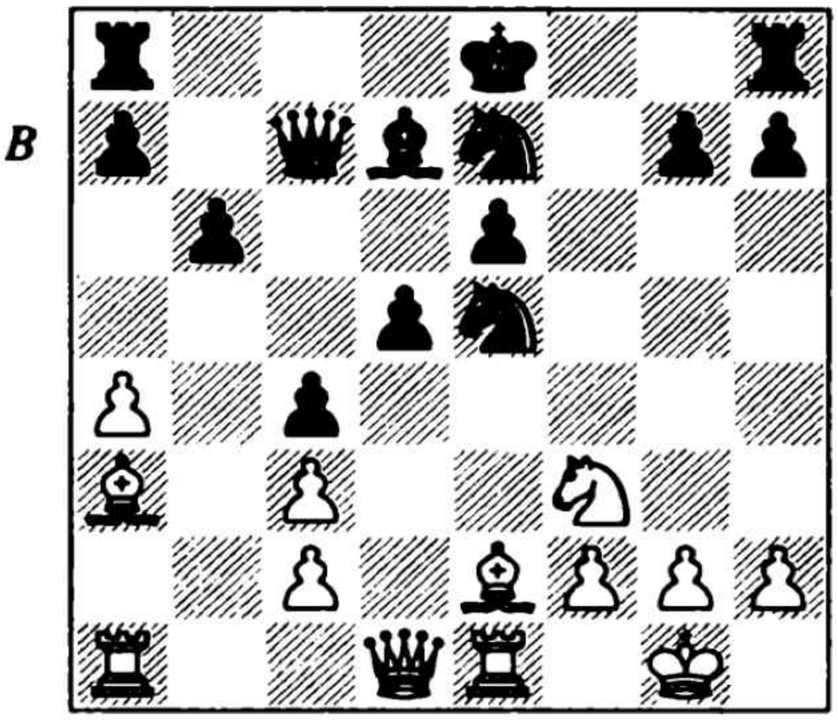
White doesn't have anything to show after 14 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 15 dxe5 ♕xe5 16 ♖e1 ♕xc3 17 ♗h5+ g6 18

♗g4 (18 ♗xe7 ♔xe7 19 ♕xd5? loses to 19...♕xa1!) 18...♕f6, etc.

14 ... ♘xe5

After 14...0-0 15 ♘d4! is followed by f4 and White has not been inveigled into misplacing his rook on e1.

15 ♖e1 *(D)*



The threat is 16 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 17 ♗h5+.

15 ... ♘7c6

Black has a seeming multiplicity of defences:

a) 15...♘5c6 16 ♘g5! 0-0! (after 16...h6 17 ♗h5+ g6 18 ♘xe6 ♗xe6 19 ♖xe6 gxh5 20 ♕xd5! ♖d8 21 ♕xh5+ ♔d7 22 ♖ae1 White regains the piece) 17 ♗g4 ♕f4! (if 17...e5, 18 ♗e6+ ♔h8 19 ♗xd5!) 18 ♗xe6+! (18 ♘xe6 ♕xf2+ 19 ♔h1 ♖f7!) 18...♗xe6 19 ♘xe6 ♕xf2+ 20 ♔h1 ♖f5! 21 ♖e2! ♕h4 22 ♘d4! ♖h5 (not 22...♘xd4? 23 ♗xe7) 23 ♘f3 ♕f6 24 ♕e1 ♖e8 25 ♖e6 ♕f7 26 ♕e2! ♖h6 27 ♖e3 followed by ♖e1

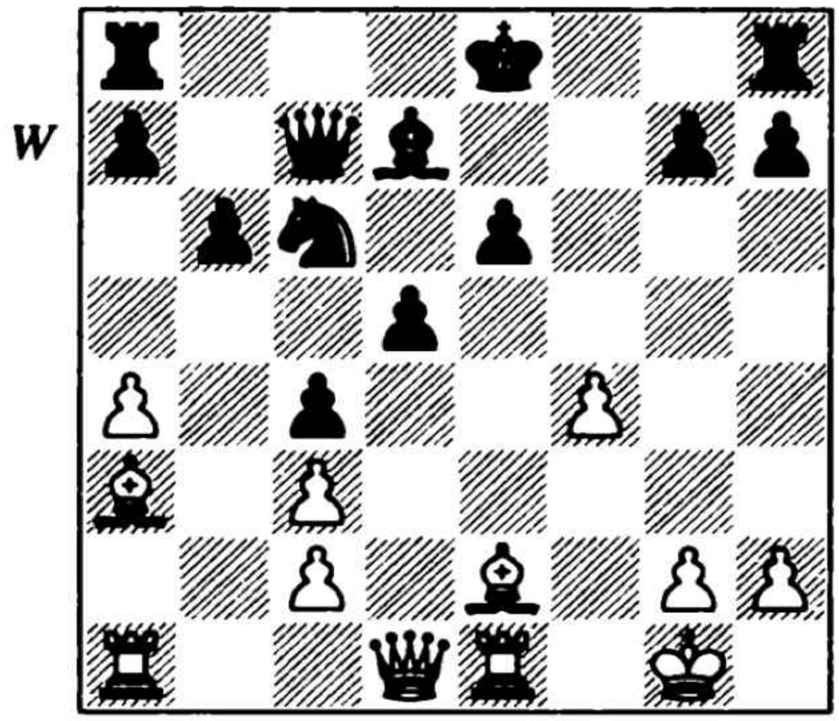
b) 15...♘5g6 16 h4! (on 16 ♘g5 0-0! 17 ♗g4 ♕f4 holds) 17...♘c6 18 ♘g5 and it's difficult for Black's king to escape the criss-cross: if 17...0-0-0?, 18 ♘f7. Or 17...h6? 18 ♘xe6! ♗xe6 19 ♗g4. Finally, on 17...♘f4, 18 ♗g4 continues the pressure.

c) 15...♘7g6 16 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 is just a transposition to the game.

16 ♘xe5 ♘xe5

17 f4 ♘c6 *(D)*

On 17...♘f7 (17...♘g6? 18 f5) 18 ♗h5 g6 19 f5! 0-0-0 20 fxe6 ♗xe6 21 ♖xe6 gxh5 22 ♕xh5 White stands much better.



18 ♗g4

Better is the finesse 18 ♗h5+! g6 (18...♔d8 19 f5 is unhealthy): 19 ♗g4 0-0-0 20 ♗xe6 ♗xe6 21 ♖xe6 ♖d7 22 ♕f3 ♘d8 23 ♖f6! ♖e8 24 ♖d1, etc.

18 ... 0-0-0

19 ♗xe6 ♗xe6

20 ♖xe6 ♖d7

To continue with f6, which gets a grip on the f-file. On 21 ♕f3 ♘d8 22 ♖e5 ♕c6 =.

21 ... ♘d8!

Driving the rook from its command outpost on the sixth rank.

22 ♖e3 ♕f4

Darga is defending with vigour!

23 ♖f3 ♕e4

24 a5!

Commencing operations against the castled king while Black's queen is temporarily cut off from the queenside.

24 ... ♘c6?

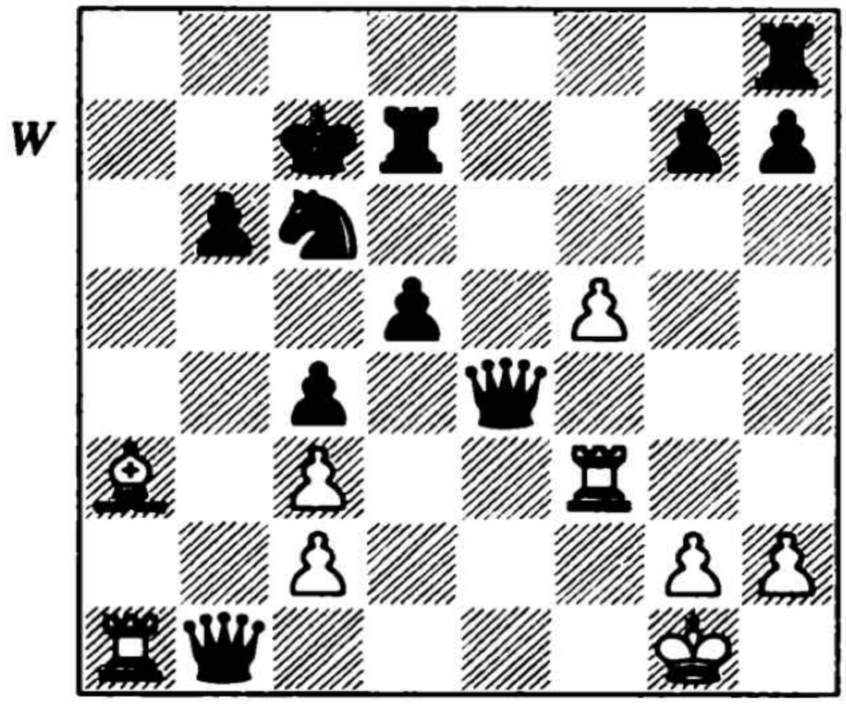
Correct was 24...b5 with an equal game.

25 axb6 axb6

26 ♕b1! ♔c7 *(D)*

The opening of the a-file is already decisive. On 26...♔b7 27 ♗c5 wins. Or 26...♖b7 27 f6 gxf6 28 ♖xf6 d4 29 ♕b5, etc.

Problem: White to play and win.



27 ♗c1! ♕e1+

There's no satisfactory defence to the threat of ♗f4+. On 27...♘e5, 28 ♗f4 ♖e8 29 ♕b5 penetrates decisively.

28 ♖f1 ♕xc3

29 ♗f4+ ♔b7

30 ♕b5! 1-0

Game 25

Lombardy [USA] – **Fischer**

USA Ch 1960/1

Sicilian Defence

When the Maroczy didn't bind

Geza Maroczy left a strong legacy: the discovery that a certain type of pawn formation imposes a near-decisive cramp on the opponent. In this game, after Lombardy's sixth move, he obtains, with Fischer's consent, the dreaded 'Maroczy bind'. From here on, given a few developing moves, White's game almost plays itself—unless Black takes early and energetic counter-measures. This is easier said than done.

The method that Fischer chooses to free himself (9...d5) involves the sacrifice of a pawn. Lombardy reacts sluggishly, overlooking a neat tactical point (17...♗h4+) at the tail-end of a combination. Even so, he still has excellent drawing chances. But somewhat discouraged by the rapid turn of events, he indulges in a unique form of self-immolation. In short, Lombardy, not Maroczy, lost.

1 e4 c5

2 ♘f3 d6

3 d4 cxd4

4 ♘xd4 ♘f6

5 f3

A passive, non-developing move which leads to nothing. White wants to gain control of d5, establishing a Maroczy bind with c4, ♘c3, etc. But after going to all that trouble he can't prevent ...d5 after all. Correct is that tired old move 5 ♘c3.

5 ... ♘c6

Sharper is 5...e5! 6 ♗b5+ (6 ♘b5 a6 7 ♘5c3 ♗e6 8 ♘d5 ♘xd5 9 exd5 ♗f5 =) 6...♘bd7 7 ♘f5 d5! 8 exd5 a6 9 ♗xd7+ ♕xd7 10 ♘e3 ♗c5 11 c4 b5 = Cardoso-Fischer, 5th match game 1957.

6 c4 e6

6...♘xd4 7 ♕xd4 g6 is a sound alternative.

7 ♘c3 ♗e7

Premature is 7...d5? 8 cxd5 exd5 9 ♗b5 winning a pawn.

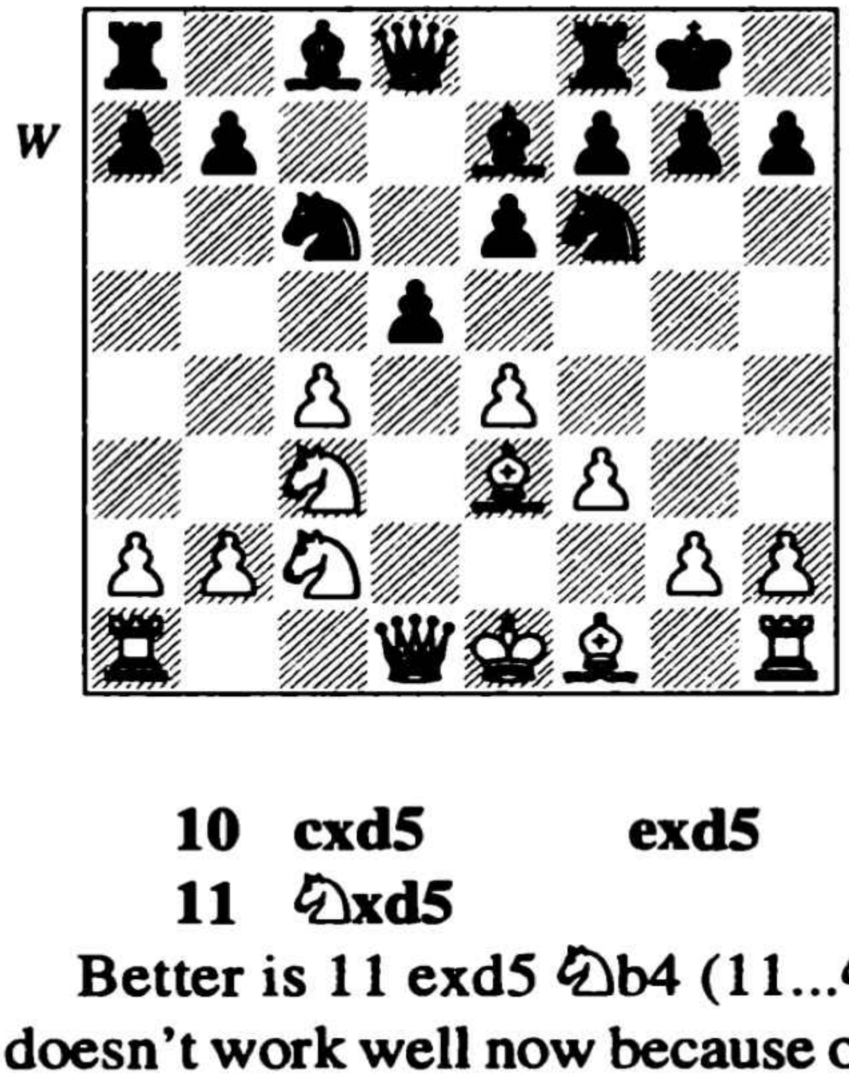
8 ♗e3

8 ♘c2 0-0 9 ♘e3 d5!? 10 cxd5 exd5 11 exd5? (11 ♘exd5 is a better chance for White) 11...♘e5 12 ♕b3 ♗c5 13 ♗d2 ♖e8 14 ♗e2 ♘g6 15 ♘c2 ♘h4 16 0-0-0 ♘xg2 and Black has the advantage; Foguelman-Fischer, Mar del Plata 1960.

8 ... 0-0

9 ♘c2 d5!? *(D)*

Reckoning that superior development compensates for the loss of a pawn. 9...♖e8 is sound but passive.



10 cxd5 exd5

11 ♘xd5

Better is 11 exd5 ♘b4 (11...♘e5 doesn't work well now because of 12 ♕d4 followed by 0-0-0) 12 ♗c4 ♗f5 13 ♘xb4 ♗xb4 14 0-0 ♖c8. Black regains the pawn, but with an inferior position.

11 ... ♘xd5

12 ♕xd5

12 exd5 ♘b4 13 ♗c4 ♗f5 14 ♘xb4 ♗xb4+ 15 ♔f2 ♖e8 gives

Black good play for the pawn, e.g. 16 ♕b3 ♗a5 threatening ...♖xe3.

12 ... ♕c7!

13 ♕b5?

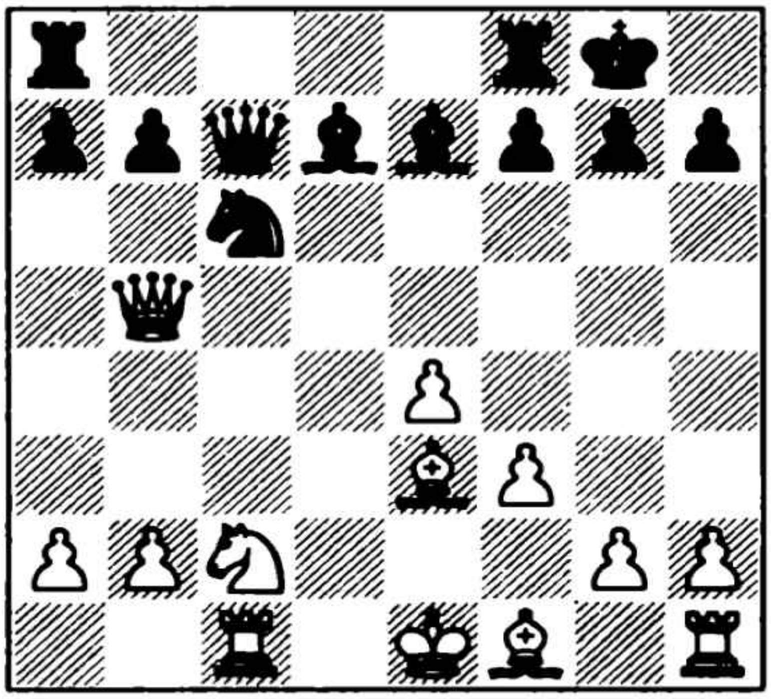
Too intent on holding on to the pawn. Correct is 13 ♗e2 ♗h4+! 14 g3 ♗f6 15 0-0 ♗xb2 16 ♖ab1 =.

13 ... ♗d7

14 ♖c1 *(D)*

Again too optimistic. After 14 ♕e2 ♗f6 15 0-0-0 White can survive —temporarily anyway (if 15...♘b4, 16 ♖xd7!).

B



14 ... ♘b4!

This unexpected 'discovery' jolts White back to reality.

15 ♘xb4

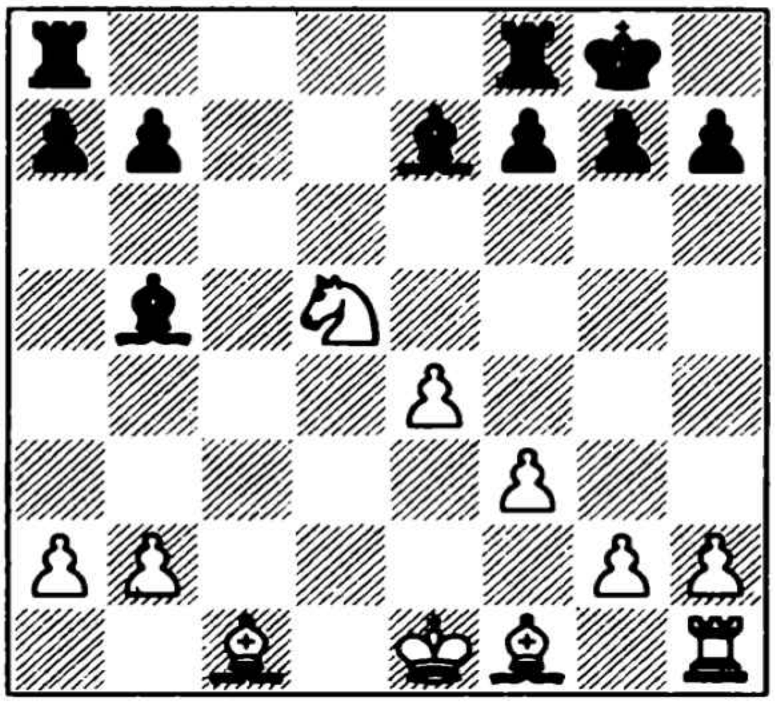
Loses the exchange, but avoids the worst. After 15 ♕e2, 15...♘xa2 regains the pawn with continuing pressure. And on 15 ♕c4 ♕a5 16 ♘xb4 ♗xb4+ 17 ♔f2 ♖ac8 18 ♕d5 ♖xc1 19 ♗xc1 ♗e1+! White meets a devastating attack wherever he turns, for example 20 ♔e3 (if 20 ♔g1? ♕b6+) 20...♕b6+ 21 ♔f4 (not 21 ♕d4? ♗f2+ or 21 ♔e2 ♕f2+ 22 ♔d1 ♗e6) 21...♕c7+ 22 e5 ♕xc1+, etc.

15 ... ♕xc1+

16 ♗xc1 ♗xb5

17 ♘d5 *(D)*

B



17 ... ♗h4+!

The scorpion's sting at the tail-end of the combination.

18 g3 ♗xf1

19 ♖xf1 ♗d8

The smoke clears. Black is an exchange ahead for a pawn. But there are still great technical difficulties. White's knight is on a dominating outpost and his pawn structure is solid.

20 ♗d2 ♖c8

21 ♗c3 f5!

Weaker would be 21...♖e8 because of g4 blocking the kingside.

22 e5

This advance is necessary, but it undermines the support of the knight (which can now be driven away).

22 ... ♖c5

23 ♘f4 (or 23 ♘e3) would cost a pawn after 23...♗a5.

23 ... ♗a5
24 a3 ♗xb4
25 axb4 ♖d5
26 ♔e2 ♔f7
27 h4 ♔e6
28 ♔e3 ♖c8
29 ♖g1 ♖c4

Black has steadily improved his grip, but his winning chances are still problematic, hinging mainly on sacrificing on b4 or e5 at the right moment.

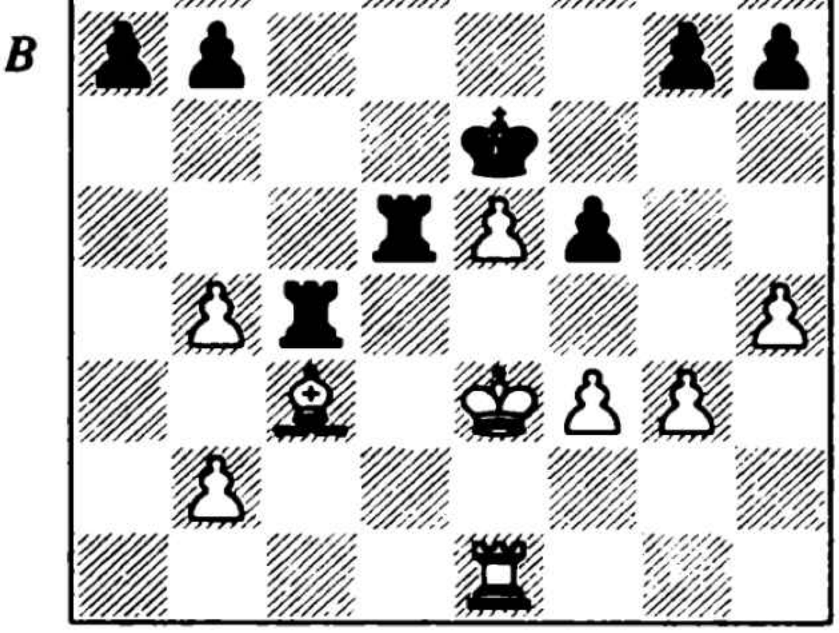
30 ♖e1? *(D)*

A gross blunder. Correct is 30 ♖a1 a6 31 ♖g1.

30 ... ♖xc3+!

Swapping everything leads to a won king and pawn ending.

31 bxc3 ♖xe5+
32 ♔d2 ♖xe1



33 ♔xe1 ♔d5
34 ♔d2 ♔c4
35 h5 b6
36 ♔c2 g5
37 h6 f4
38 g4 a5
39 bxa5 bxa5
40 ♔b2 a4
41 ♔a3 ♔xc3
42 ♔xa4 ♔d4
43 ♔b4 ♔e3
0-1

Game 26

Fischer – Reshevsky [USA]

New York 1961: 2nd Match Game

Sicilian Defence

Time will tell

The opening has always been regarded as the old warrior's weak point, ar were it not for this handicap who knows how far Reshevsky might have gor toward the summit?

Whatever the case, being familiar with the latest wrinkles does have th merit of saving time on the clock and, hopefully, of catching an opponent o guard. Although Reshevsky is bested in the theoretical duel (after 13 ♗f3) his practical cunning enables him to extricate himself—at a great cost of time. In the end it is the clock, as much as Fischer's persistence, that causes his downfall.

1 e4 c5
2 ♘f3 ♘c6
3 d4 cxd4
4 ♘xd4 g6

Allowing White the chance to get a Maroczy bind (with 5 c4). Apparently Reshevsky had booked up on this for the match. Black's idea is to dispense with an early ...d6 and possibly strive for a later ...d5 (thereby saving a tempo).

5 ♘c3

In match game 11 I got an edge with the more traditional 5 c4 ♘f6 6 ♘c3 ♘xd4 7 ♕xd4 d6 8 ♗e2 ♗g7 9 ♗e3 0-0 10 ♕d2, etc.

5 ... ♗g7
6 ♗e3 ♘f6
7 ♗e2

In the 4th and 6th games of the match I continued with 7 ♗c4 0-0 8 ♗b3 ♘g4 (8...♘a5? brought Reshevsky to grief against me in the US Ch 1958/9 after 9 e5 ♘e8 10 ♗xf7+! ♔xf7 11 ♘e6!! winning Black's queen) 9 ♕xg4 ♘xd4 and White got a clear advantage both with ♕h4 and ♕d1 respectively.

7 ... 0-0

On 7...d5?, 8 ♗b5 wins a pawn.

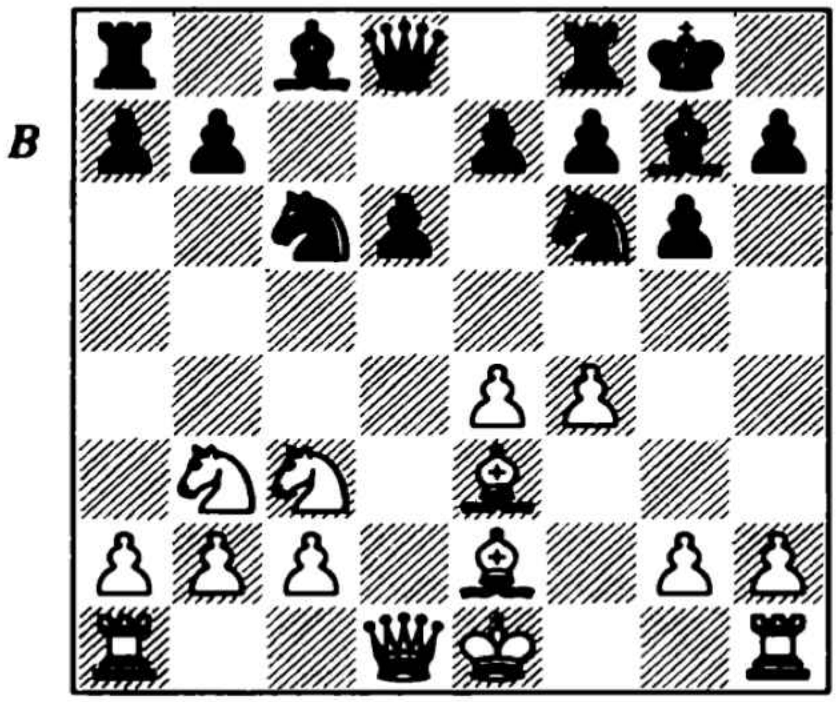
8 f4

Despite his familiarity with the Dragon Variation, I felt Reshevsky really didn't know the latest wrinkles in Alekhine's Attack. The point of Black's 'accelerated fianchetto' becomes apparent after the indifferent 8 0-0? d5! 9 exd5 ♘b4 =.

8 ... d6

Now on 8...d5?, 9 e5 ♘e4 10 ♘xe4 dxe4 11 ♘xc6 bxc6 12 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 13 ♗c4 gives White a winning ending; Olafsson-Larsen, Wageningen 1957.

9 ♘b3 *(D)*



9 ... ♗e6

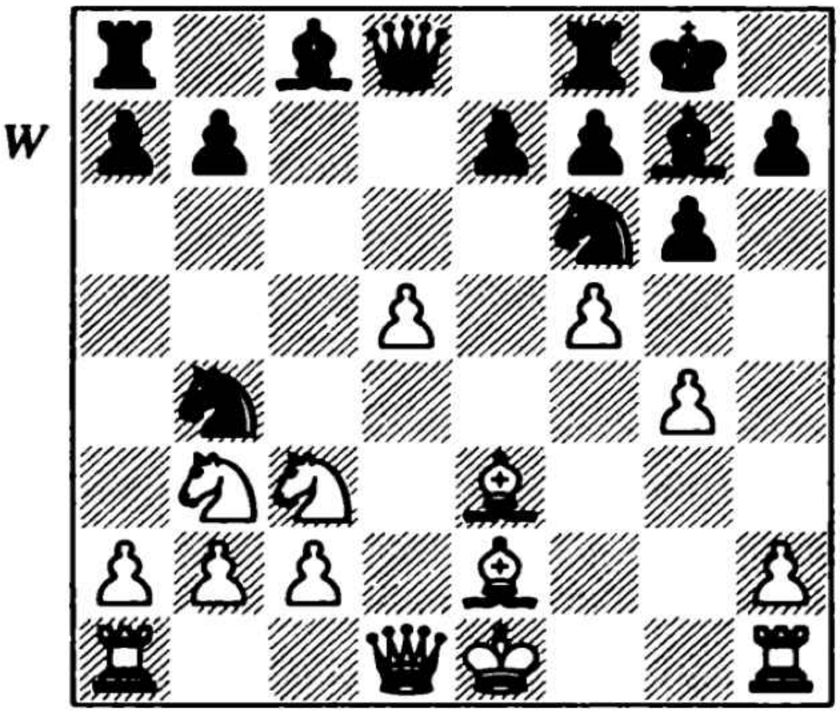
I was right. This is the old (and second-rate) move. Correct is 9...a5! 10 a4 ♗e6 11 ♘d4? (after 11 g4 ♘b4! Black's knight can no longer be dislodged by a3; the best White has is 11 0-0 ♖c8 with an equal position) 11...♕b6! 12 ♘xe6 ♕xe3 13 ♘xf8 ♘g4 and Black has a strong attack; Makievsky-Veresov, USSR 1954.

10 g4 d5

11 f5 ♗c8

Lipnitsky recommends 11...gxf5!?. It's interesting.

12 exd5 ♘b4 *(D)*



13 ♗f3!

The modern way—White maintains his centre pawn and sacs two pawns on the kingside where Black must expose his king to get them.

13 d6 has been known to be only a draw since the famous Alekhine-Botvinnik encounter, Nottingham 1936, which continued: 13...♕xd6! (if 13...exd6?, 14 g5) 14 ♗c5 ♕f4 15 ♖f1 ♕xh2 16 ♗xb4 ♘xg4! 17 ♗xg4 ♕g3+ 18 ♖f2 ♕g1+ with a perpetual.

Another weak line is 13 fxg6 hxg6 14 ♗f3 ♗xg4! 15 ♗xg4 ♘xg4 16 ♕xg4 ♘xc2+ 17 ♔f2 ♘xa1 18 ♖xa1 ♖c8! with a good game. If 19 ♗d4? ♖c4 (Panov).

14 a3 fxg4

15 ♗g2!

On 15 axb4 gxf3 16 ♕xf3 ♗g4 followed by ...♗h5-g6. White's whole idea is to keep Black's light-squared bishop restricted to the queenside.

15 ... ♘a6

16 ♕d3!

Nei's improvement over 16 ♕e2 ♗f5! and the bishop retreats to g6, when necessary, defending the kingside.

16 ... e6

The best choice in a difficult position. Up to here we had both played briskly, but now Reshevsky began to consume time on the clock. After 16...♘d7 17 0-0-0 ♘e5 18 ♕e2 Black's game is lifeless. White has h3 and ♗d4 in the offing.

17 0-0-0

Black gets the initiative after 17 d6? ♘d5! 18 ♗xd5 exd5 19 ♕xd5 ♖e8, etc.

17 ... ♘xd5

The lesser evil. On 17...exd5, 18 h3 g3 19 ♗d4 is strong.

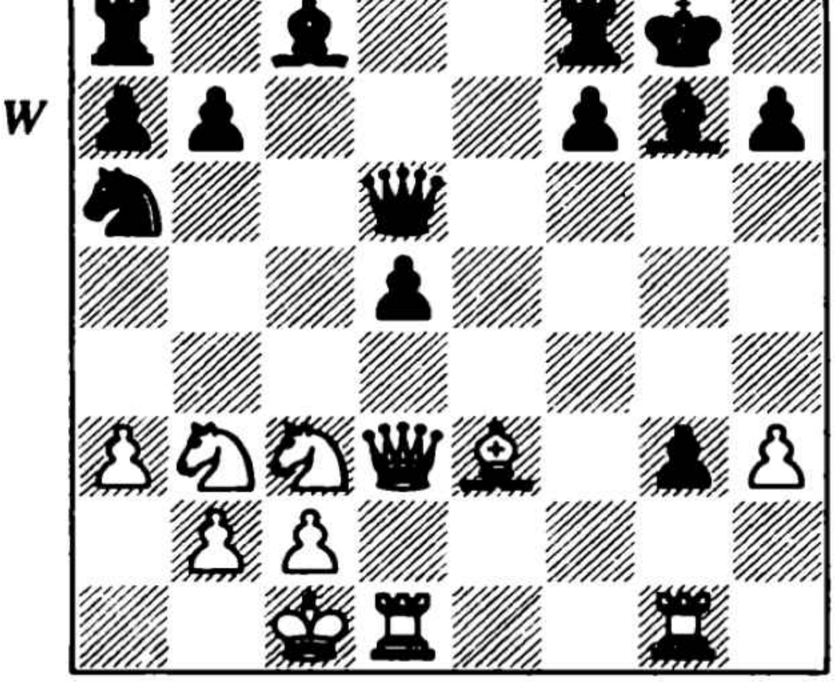
18 h3! g3

19 ♖hg1 ♕d6!

Reshevsky is putting up a first-rate defence.

20 ♗xd5 exd5 *(D)*

Despite his material deficit, it is obvious White has a strong attack. His problem is how to land a haymaker.



This gives Black a little breathing space.

Nowadays I would have played 21 ♗d4! without giving it a second thought. After 21...♗xd4 22 ♖xg3+ ♗g7 (22...♔h8 23 ♕xd4+ f6 24 ♖f3 leads to a bind) 23 ♖dg1 ♕h6+ 24 ♔b1 ♗e6 25 ♖xg7+ ♕xg7 26 ♖xg7+ ♔xg7 27 ♕g3+ ♔h8 (White wins after 27...♔f6 28 ♕d6 ♔g7 29 ♘xd5) 28 ♕e5+ ♔g8 29 ♕g5+ ♔h8 30 ♕f6+ ♔g8 31 ♘e2 with a winning bind.

21 ... ♔h8

22 ♗f4

22 ♗d4 is less convincing now after 22...♗xd4 (22...f6? 23 ♖xg3 ♕xd5 24 ♗xf6!) 23 ♕xd4+ f6 and White has no forced win.

22 ... ♕g6

23 ♕d2

Overlooking his reply. Vuković suggests 23 ♕f3, but 23...♗f5! 24 ♖xg3 ♕c6 holds.

23 ... ♗xh3!

Reshevsky chopped it off fast—he doesn't wait to be asked twice.

24 ♖xg3 ♗g4

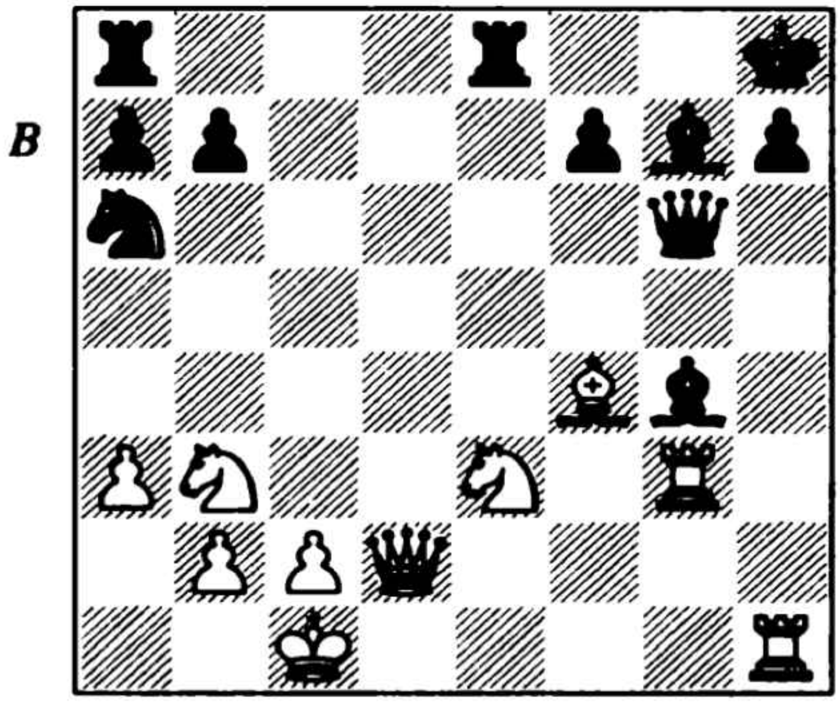
Black has succeeded in transferring this bishop to the kingside and in sealing the g-file.

25 ♖h1

So White begins operations on the h-file!

23 ... ♖fe8

26 ♘e3 *(D)*



26 ... ♕e4?

Anxious to simplify and ease the tension (in time-pressure) Reshevsky finally goes astray.

The tempting 26...♕f6 is refuted by 27 ♘xg4 ♕xb2+ 28 ♔d1 ♖ad8 29 ♖d3, etc.

But simply 26...f5! holds, e.g. 27 ♕h2 ♔g8.

27 ♕h2!

Now the roof caves in on Black's kingside.

27 ... ♗e6

The late Abe Turner suggested 27...♗f5, but then 28 ♖xg7! ♔xg7 29 ♘xf5+ ♕xf5 30 ♘d4 wins.

28 ♖xg7!

That does it! Once this bishop is gone, White has a field day. "Why didn't White play 28 ♘d2...? So far as I can see Black can then resign. Or am I missing something?" (A. R. B. Thomas in a letter to *Chess*). Right, Mr. Thomas!

28 ... ♔xg7
29 ♕h6+ ♔g8

On 26...♔h8, 27 ♗e5+ mates in two.

30 ♖g1+ ♕g6
31 ♖xg6+ fxg6
32 ♘d4 ♖ad8
33 ♗e5 ♖d7
34 ♘xe6 ♖xe6
35 ♘g4 ♖f7
36 ♕g5 ♖f1+
37 ♔d2 h5
38 ♕d8+ 1-0

After 38...♖f8, 39 ♘h6+ taxes even Reshevsky's defensive ability.

Game 27

Reshevsky [USA] – **Fischer**

New York 1961: 5th Match Game

Semi-Tarrasch Defence

Sheer pyrotechnics

Here, in probably the most exciting game of the match, Fischer, trying to win a pawn, unwittingly triggers a series of 'desperado' combinations which are brilliant and unorthodox. Pure tactics predominate for a period of ten moves (19 to 29). It is almost impossible to determine who is winning until Reshevsky emerges a clear exchange ahead. In the tricky ending that ensues Fischer obviously is fighting for a draw. But, once again, he has the clock as an ally.

In time-pressure, trying to preserve his slim advantage, Reshevsky plays an aggressive line in which Fischer finds a hole—enabling him to reverse their roles. Conscious of his newly acquired advantage, Fischer storms down the board with his kingside pawns and overwhelms his opponent.

1 d4 ♘f6
2 c4 e6
3 ♘c3 d5
4 cxd5

This exchange variation, though insipid, has always been to Reshevsky's taste.

4 ... ♘xd5

4...exd5 leads to the kind of wood pushing that always bored me.

5 ♘f3

Prematurely forceful is 5 e4 ♘xc3 6 bxc3 c5 7 ♘f3 cxd4 8 cxd4 ♗b4+ with equality.

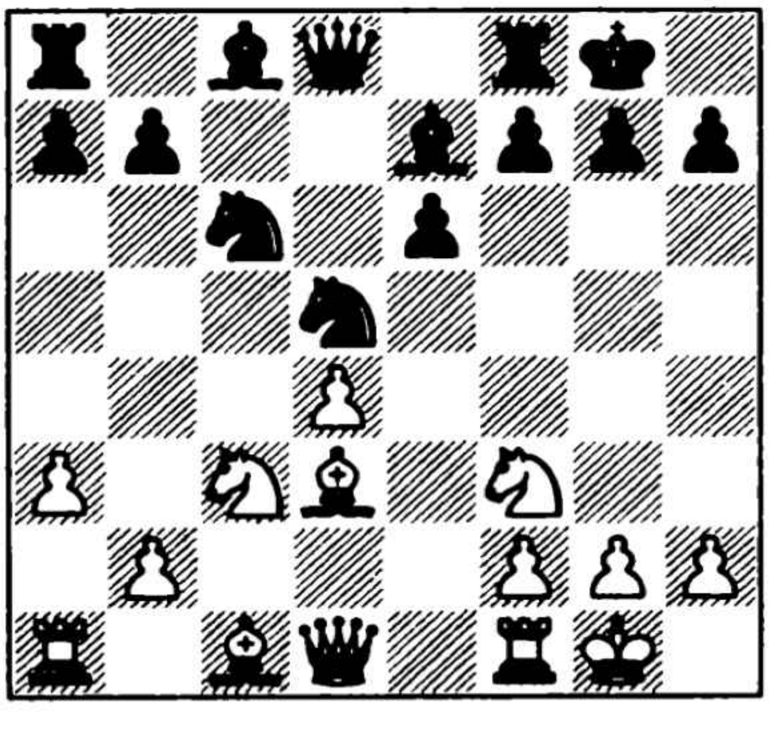
5 ... c5
6 e3 ♘c6
7 ♗d3

Botvinnik and Robert Byrne prefer 7 ♗c4. A possible continuation might be 7...cxd4 8 exd4 ♗e7 9 0-0 0-0 10 ♖e1 a6 = (weaker is 10...b6 11 ♘xd5 exd5 12 ♗b5 Botvinnik-Alekhine, AVRO 1938).

7 ... ♗e7

An alternative is 7...cxd4 8 exd4 g6 9 h4!? (9 0-0 ♗g7 10 ♗e4 is the positional approach) 9...♗g7 (better is 9...h6) 10 h5 ♘db4 11 ♗g5 ♘xd3+ 12 ♕xd3 ♕a5 13 ♔f1 h6? 14 hxg6! hxg5 15 ♖xh8+ ♗xh8 16 gxf7+ ♔xf7 17 ♕h7+ ♗g7 18 d5! White won shortly; Balcerowski-Dunkelblum, Varna OL 1962.

8 0-0 0-0
9 a3 cxd4
10 exd4 *(D)*



Fairly typical of the Semi-Tarrasch formation: White has the freer game and attacking prospects, but the drawback of his isolated d-pawn should not be minimised. Chances are even.

10 ... ♘f6

Also playable is 10...♗d7 11 ♕c2 g6 12 ♗h6 ♖e8 13 ♘e4 ♖c8 14 ♕e2 f5 15 ♘c3 ♗f6; R. Byrne-Bisguier, US Ch 1963/4.

Another possibility is 10...b6!? 11 ♘xd5 ♕xd5 12 ♕c2 ♗b7! 13 ♗xh7+ ♔h8 14 ♗e4 ♘xd4 15 ♗xd5 ♘xc2 16 ♗xb7 ♘xa1 17 ♗xa8 ♖xa8 18 ♗g5 f6 =.

11 ♗c2

A more flexible plan is 11 ♗e3 followed by ♕e2 and ♖ad1.

11 ... b6
12 ♕d3 ♗b7
13 ♗g5 g6
14 ♖fe1 ♖e8
15 h4

Evans criticised this 'aggressive pass' and Barden extolled it. I don't see how else White can make headway. He has to create some kingside threats before Black consolidates and piles up on his d-pawn.

15 ... ♖c8
16 ♖ac1 ♘d5
17 ♘e4 f5!?

I knew that this was 'an ugly positional blunder', but I actually thought Black would get the better of it after 18 ♘c3 ♗xg5 19 hxg5 ♘xc3 20 bxc3 (not 20 ♕xc3? ♘e5)

20...♘a5! (threatening ...♗xf3 and ...♕xg5).

18 ♘c3 ♗xg5

19 ♘xg5!

Crossing me up!

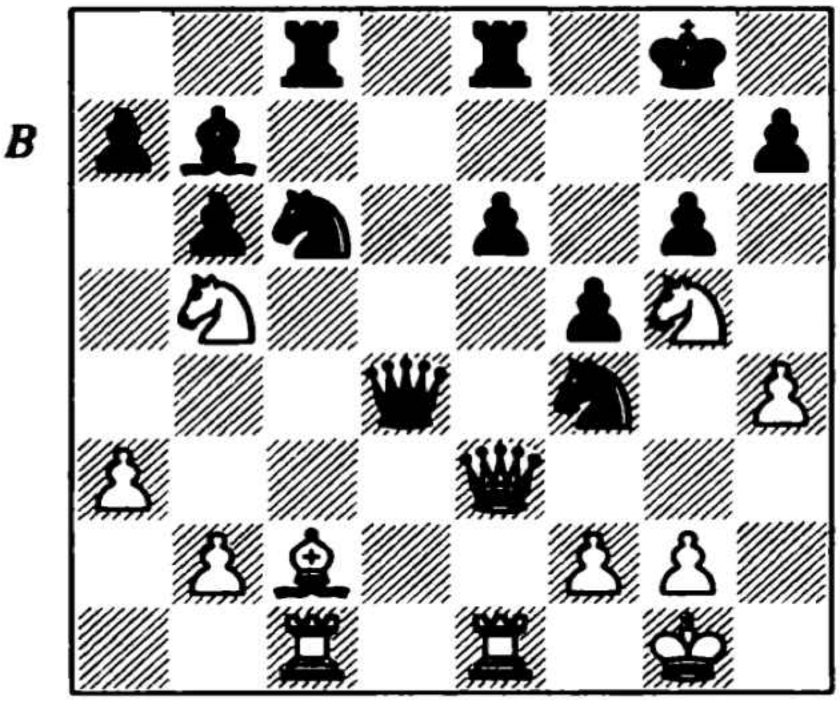
19 ... ♘f4

20 ♕e3

Not 20 ♕g3? ♘h5 21 ♕e3 ♘xd4.

20 ... ♕xd4

21 ♘b5! *(D)*



Marvellously alert! After the practically forced trade of queens, White wins the exchange because of the imminent fork on d6.

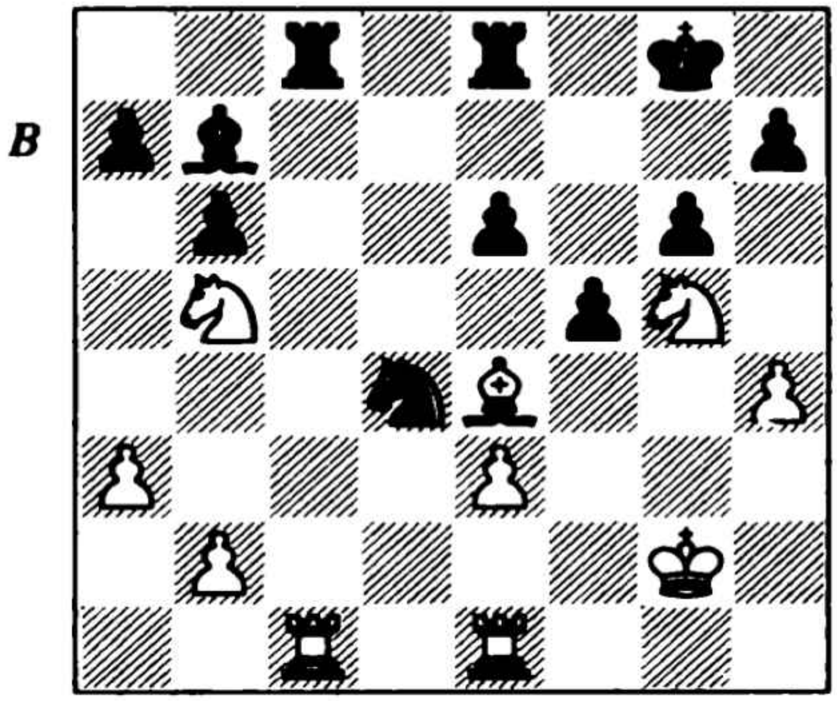
21 ... ♕xe3

Best. After the game we analysed 21...♕d5 22 ♕xf4 ♕xb5 (if 22...♘d4? 23 ♗e4! ♖xc1 24 ♕xc1! fxe4 25 ♕c7) 23 ♘xe6 ♕xb2 (if 23...♕d5 24 ♘c7 ♖xe1+ 25 ♖xe1 ♕f7 26 ♘e6 keeps the advantage) 24 ♕h6! (Reshevsky) with an irresistible attack. On 24...♘a5 (to stop ♗b3; if 24...♖xe6, 25 ♖xe6 ♘d4 26 ♖e7 wins) 25 ♗xf5! gxf5 (if 25...♕f6 26 ♘g5! or 25...♖xc1 26 ♖xc1 gxf5 27 ♖c7 wins) 26 ♖b1 ♕h8 (if 26...♕c3, 27 ♖e3) 27 ♕g5+ ♔f7 28 ♕xf5+ ♔g8 (not 28...♕f6? 29 ♕xh7+) 29 ♖e3 ♖c3 30 ♘g5! ♖f8 31 ♖e8! forces mate.

22 fxe3 ♘xg2!

23 ♔xg2 ♘d4+

24 ♗e4! *(D)*



This game was played at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Los Angeles, and I can still hear the audience gasping with each blow, thinking each of us had overlooked it in turn. "Fischer is winning!" "Reshevsky is winning!" The true state of affairs will crystallise in a matter of moves.

24 ... ♗xe4+

25 ♘xe4 ♘xb5

26 ♘f6+

So the fork, after all, takes place here instead of d6!

26 ... ♔f7

27 ♘xe8 ♖xe8

28 a4!

Inaccurate is 28 ♖ed1 ♖e7! and

the knight can climb back into the game via c7-d5.

28 ... ♘d6

29 ♖c7+ ♔f6!

Black can't afford 29...♖e7 30 ♖ec1. The rook is needed to mobilise the kingside pawns.

30 ♖ec1!

Keeping control of the open file. On either 30 ♖xa7 or 30 ♖xh7, there follows 30...♖c8.

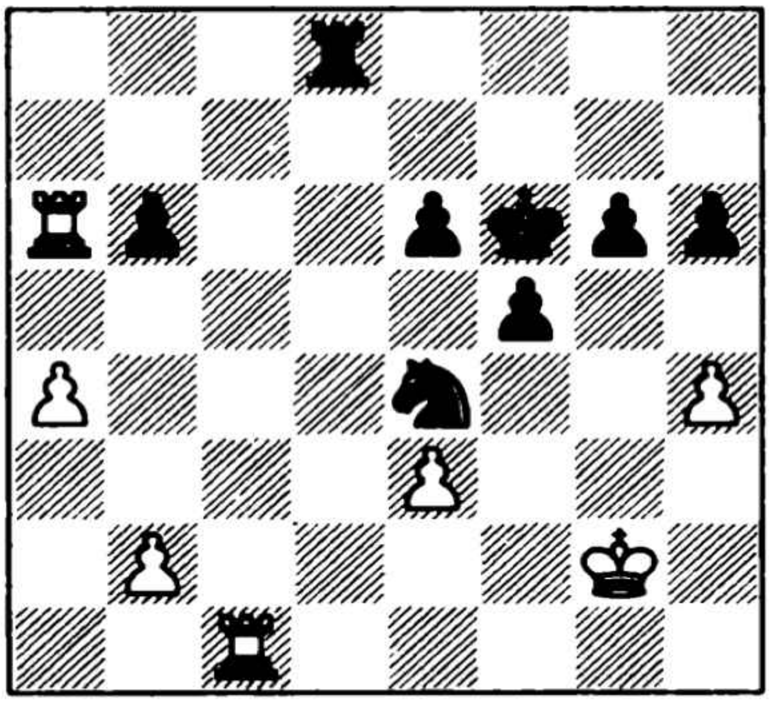
30 ... h6

31 ♖xa7 ♘e4

32 ♖a6 ♖d8! *(D)*

32...♖b8 33 ♖c6 is hopeless.

W



Now it's clear that Black's fighting for a draw.

33 ♖c2

The only way to preserve winning chances. After 33 ♖xb6 ♖d2+ 34 ♔g1 g5 35 hxg5+ (on 35 ♖cc6 gxh4 36 ♖xe6+ ♔g5 37 ♖g6+ ♔h5 38 ♖xh6+ ♔g4 Black has enough play on the kingside to hold the draw; but not 35 a5? gxh4 36 a6 h3 37 a7 h2+ 38 ♔h1 ♘g3 mate) 35...hxg5 36 ♖cc6 (not 36 a5? g4 37 a6 ♘g5 38 a7 ♘f3+ 39 ♔f1 g3 40 a8♕ g2 mate!) 36...g4 37 ♖xe6+ ♔g5 38 ♖h6 f4 Black holds the balance.

33 ... ♖d3

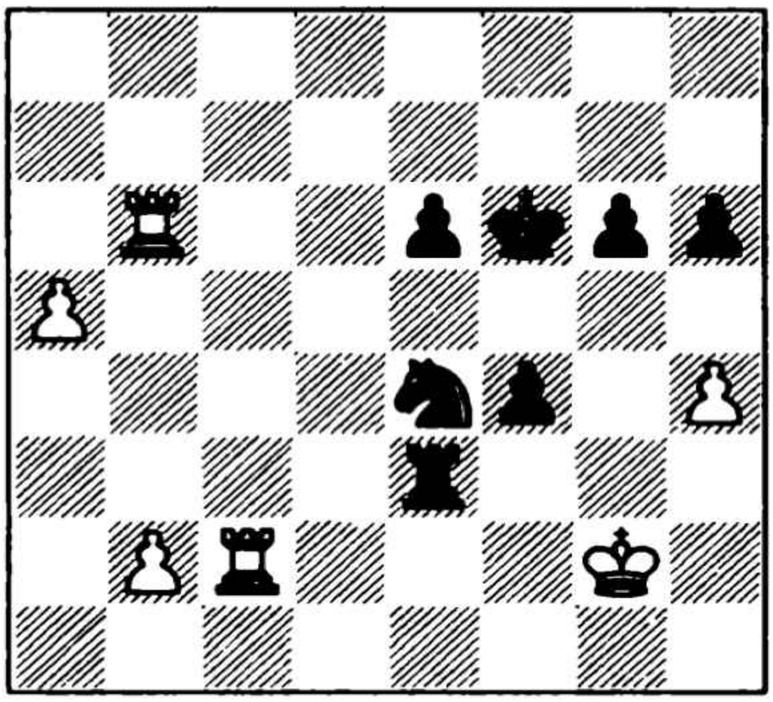
34 ♖xb6

After 34 ♔f3 ♖b3 Black is in great shape.

34 ... ♖xe3

35 a5 f4 *(D)*

W



36 ♖f2?

Short of time, Reshevsky probably didn't see how Black's rook could get back in time to stop the a-pawn. But now it is doubtful that White can even draw!

White should settle for 36 a6 f3+ 37 ♔f1 (not 37 ♔h2? ♖e2+) 37...♖d3 38 ♔e1 ♖e3+ 39 ♔f1 ♖d3 with a draw. If 40 ♔g1 ♖d1+ 41 ♔h2 f2 42 ♖xf2+ ♘xf2 43 ♖b3 (43 a7 ♖a1 wins) 43...♖d7 44 ♖f3+ ♔g7 45 ♖xf2 ♖a7 =.

36 ... ♘xf2

37 ♔xf2 ♖e5!

38 b4 ♖e3!

This manoeuvre permits the rook to get behind the passed pawn.

39 a6 ♖a3

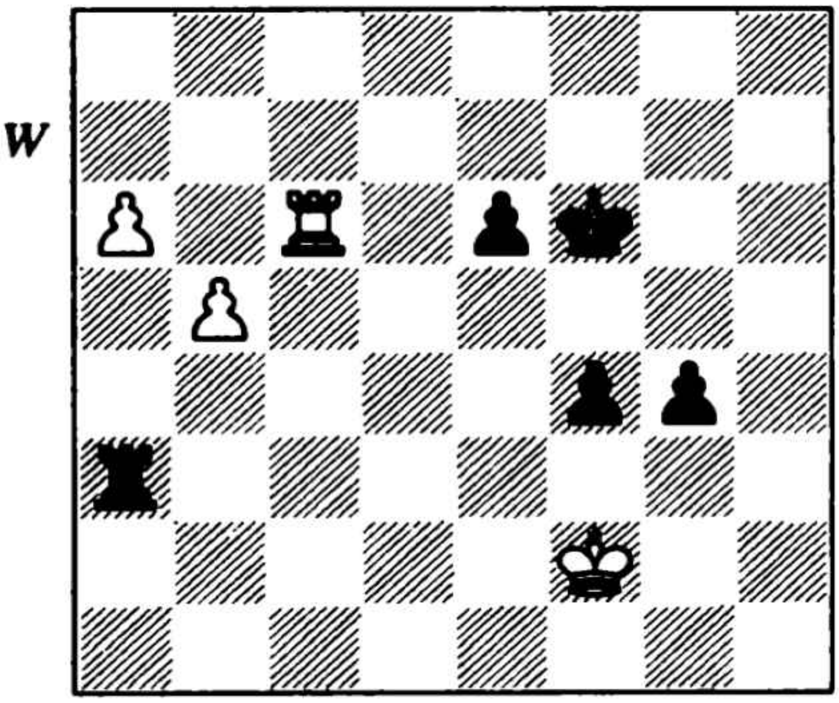
Now White is stymied. In order to mobilise his queenside pawns, he must inch forward with b5, ♖b7, a7, b6, etc. But a half-dozen moves, in chess, can be a lifetime.

40 ♖c6

The last move of the time-control, and it definitely loses. The best chance is 40 b5 with the possibility of ♖b8 and b6 (giving up the a-pawn) followed by b7 in some key variations.

40 ... g5
41 hxg5+ hxg5
42 b5 g4 *(D)*

The sealed move. Black's passed pawns suddenly proliferate from nowhere!



43 ♖c8

The line I had expected was 43 ♖c1 (intending to bolster the pawns from behind with ♖b1) 43...g3+ 44 ♔g1 (on 44 ♔g2 ♖a2+ 45 ♔f3 ♔f5 wins) 44...♖a2! 45 ♖b1 f3 46 b6 ♖g2+ 47 ♔f1 ♖h2! 48 ♔e1 ♖h1+ 49 ♔d2 ♖xb1 50 a7 f2 51 a8♕ f1♕ and Black wins, since White has no perpetual check.

43 ... ♔f5
44 b6 g3+
45 ♔e1

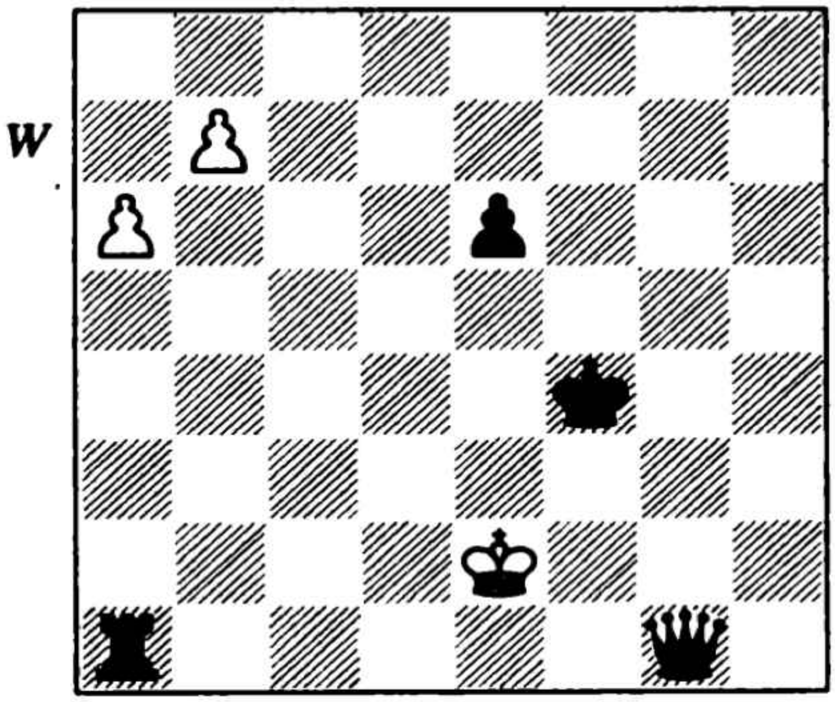
He decides to let the pawns through rather than get mated after 45 ♔g2 ♖a2+ 46 ♔g1 f3, etc.

45 ... ♖a1+
46 ♔e2 g2
47 ♖f8+

On 47 ♖g8 ♖xa6 48 b7 (if 48 ♖xg2 ♖xb6 wins), 48...♖b6 is decisive.

47 ... ♔e4
48 ♖xf4+ ♔xf4
49 b7 g1♕ *(D)*

A hasty slip which, fortunately, still wins. As Isaac Kashdan pointed out after the game 50...♔e4! wins outright: e.g. 51 b8♕ ♖a2+ 52 ♔any g1♕ mate. "What will the Russians say when they see this match?" he inquired, with gentle irony.



50 b8♕+ ♔f5

51 ♕f8+ ♔e4

52 ♕a8+

No better is 52 ♕f3+ ♔e5 53 ♕c3+ (if 53 ♕h5+ ♔d6) 53...♕d4 54 ♕g3+ ♔d5 55 ♕f3+ ♕e4+ and so on.

52 ... ♔d4

Delicate footwork is required to escape the perpetual.

53 ♕d8+

Better than 53 ♕h8+ ♔c4 54 ♕c8+ ♕c5 55 ♕xe6+ ♔b4 56 ♕e4+ ♕c4+.

53 ... ♔c4

54 ♕d3+ ♔c5

55 ♕c3+ ♔d6

56 ♕d2+ ♔e5

57 ♕b2+ ♔f5

0-1

He runs out of checks after 58 ♕b5+ ♔f6 59 ♕b2+ e5.

Game 28

Reshevsky [USA] – **Fischer**

Los Angeles 1961: 11th Match Game

King's Indian Defence

A peccable draw

What proved to be the last game of this ill-starred match is a good example of how Reshevsky, by virtue of pluck, stamina, and alertness, salvages a draw from a lost position. It exemplifies, too, the demoralising effect that continuously strong resistance can have on even the most robust opponent.

Fischer rapidly wrests the initiative and wins the exchange as the result of a pretty combination (28...♕xe4). However, he has difficulty gaining the offensive because Reshevsky throws obstacle after obstacle in his path. Nevertheless, Fischer's material advantage begins to make itself felt. He misses clear wins (on moves 38 and 42) whereupon his game deteriorates sufficiently to permit his stubborn opponent to set up an adequate defence. Still, there are several surprises in store just at the very end.

1 c4 ♘f6

2 d4 g6

3 ♘c3 ♗g7

4 e4 0-0

5 ♗e2

Inferior is 5 e5. See Game 21.

5 ... d6

6 ♘f3 e5

7 0-0

For 7 d5 see Game 7.

7 ... ♘c6

8 d5

Match game 9 (Reshevsky as White) had continued: 8 ♗e3 ♖e8 9 dxe5 (9 d5 ♘d4! equalises fully) 9...dxe5 10 ♕xd8 ♘xd8 11 ♘b5 ♘e6 12 ♘g5 ('full of sound and fury, signifying nothing'—Evans) 12...♖e7 =. See Game 57, note to Black's move 13.

8 ... ♘e7
9 ♘e1 ♘d7
10 ♘d3 f5
11 exf5

11 f3 f4 followed by ...g5, etc., gives Black a strong attack on the kingside.

11 ... ♘xf5

11...gxf5, keeping Black's pawn front mobile, is very strong.

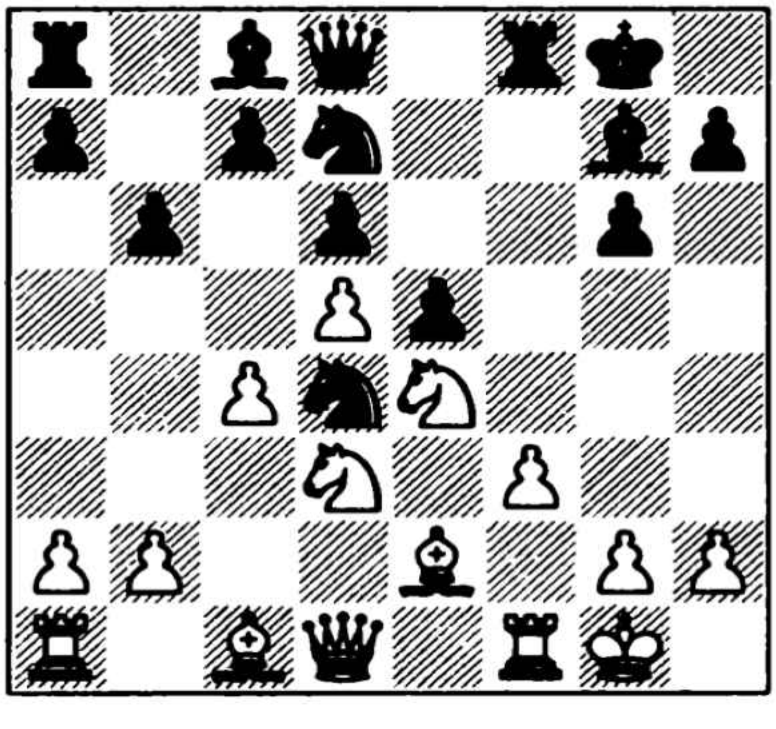
12 f3 ♘d4

For 12...♘f6 see Game 30.

13 ♘e4 b6 *(D)*

Hindering White's thematic break with c5.

W



14 ♗g5?

Apparently gaining a tempo, but only driving the queen to a better square. 14 ♗d2 or 14 ♖e1 appear to be more accurate.

14 ... ♕e8
15 ♗d2

This bishop must retreat eventually after ...h6. The idea is to prepare b4 without having to fear the reply ...a5.

15 ... a5

Gaining more time. White must now stop for b3 (to enforce b4). The immediate 16 a3 allows 16...a4!, fixing the queenside.

16 ♖e1 ♘xe2+

Otherwise the bishop retreats to f1.

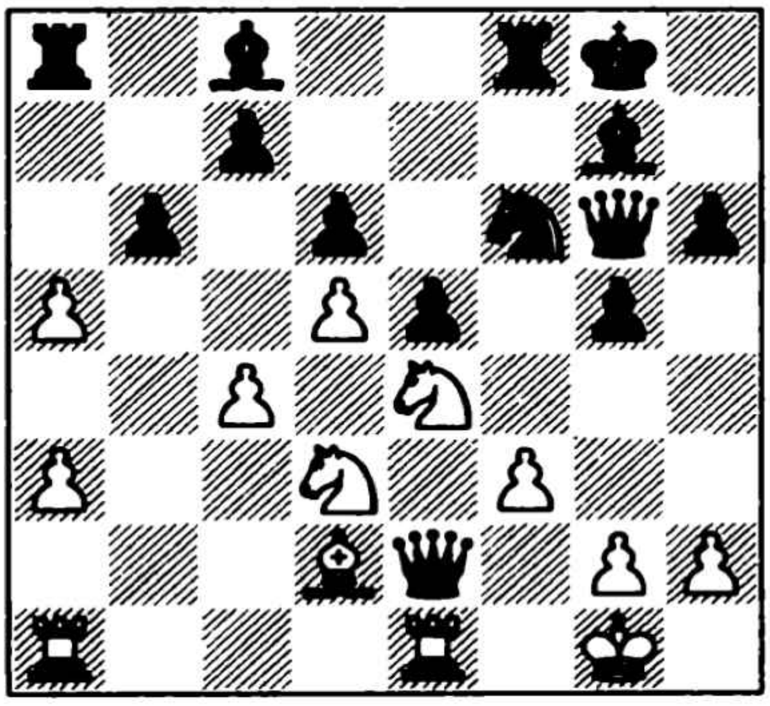
17 ♕xe2 h6
18 b3 g5
19 a3 ♕g6

Now it's obvious that it was a mistake to force Black's queen to e8—its presence on g6 lends momentum to the kingside initiative.

20 b4 ♘f6
21 bxa5? *(D)*

The solid 21 ♘df2 is correct, but after 21...♘h5 Black stands better.

B



Now Reshevsky is hoping to get some counterplay after 21...bxa5 22 ♘df2 ♘h5 23 c5, etc. But—

21 ... g4!

—doesn't give him time to get it in.

22 ♘df2

Not 22 axb6? gxf3 23 ♕xf3 ♘xe4 24 ♕xe4 ♗f5 wins a piece. On 22 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 23 f4 ♗f5 White's in trouble.

22 ... gxf3
23 ♕xf3 ♘h5

Stepping up the pressure. On 23...♘xd5, 24 ♕g3 holds.

24 ♕e3 bxa5

Finally!

25 ♖ac1

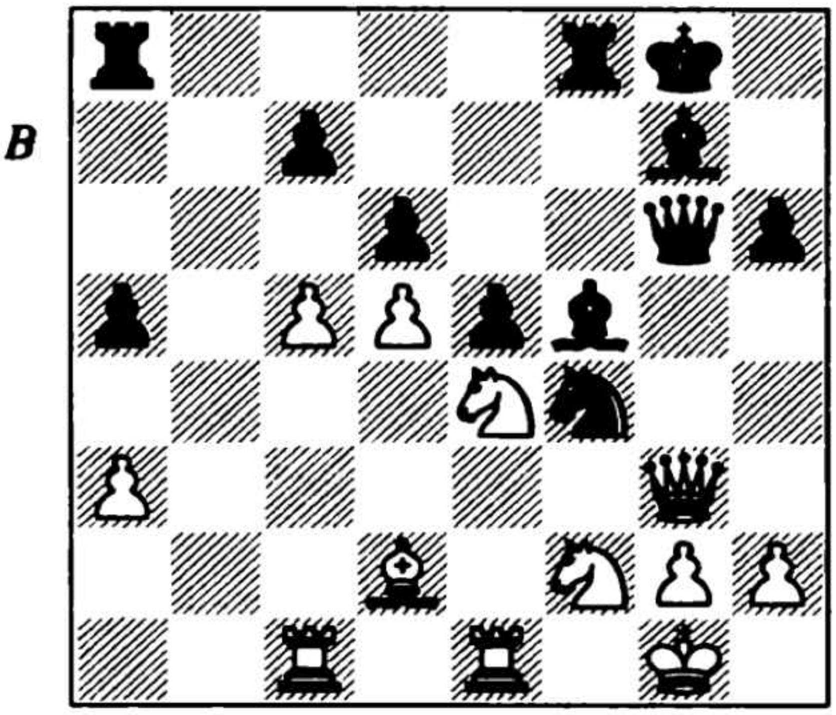
Typically, Reshevsky wants to mobilise his queenside without making any concessions or creating any kingside weaknesses. After 25 g3 ♘f4 26 ♔h1 ♘h3! it's just a matter of time before Black invades on the light squares.

25 ... ♗f5
26 c5

Loses material, but probably the best chance. After 26 g3 ♖f7 followed by ...♖af8 White is not long for this world.

26 ... ♘f4
27 ♕g3 *(D)*

Blunders the exchange. But it is no longer possible to play 27 g3 ♘xd5, etc.

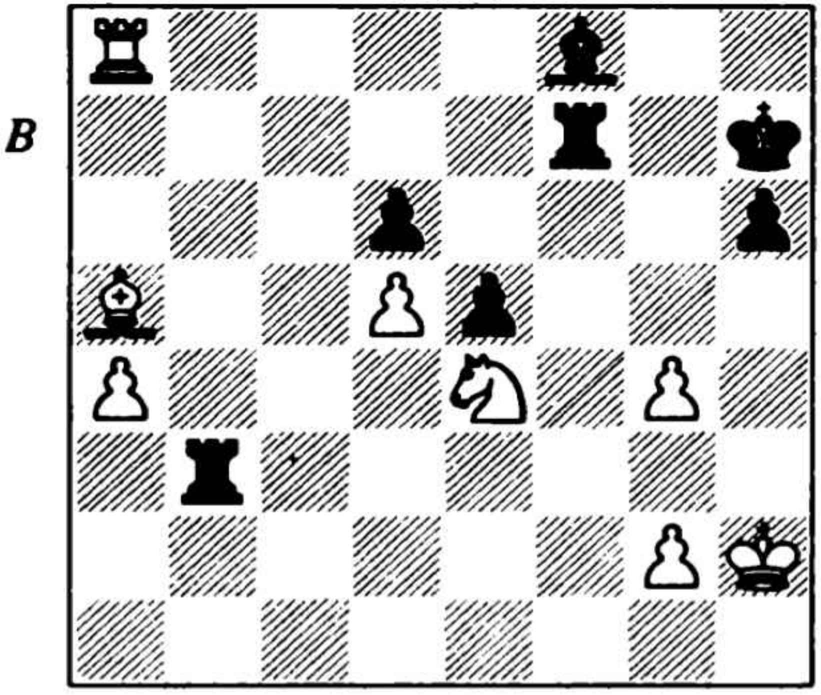


Flustered, White makes the task somewhat easier. Better is 28 ♘xe4 (not 28 ♗xf4? exf4) 28...♕xg3 29 hxg3 ♘d3 30 cxd6 cxd6 31 ♖c6 ♘xe1 32 ♗xe1 with many more chances of holding the ending than in the actual game.

28 ... ♕xe4!
29 ♘xe4 ♘e2+
30 ♔h1 ♘xg3+
31 hxg3 ♖a6!
32 cxd6 cxd6
33 a4

"Black has won the exchange, but the technical difficulties confronting him are enormous. His pawns are discombobulated, his bishop is hemmed in and his rooks are virtually immobilised. Still, one has the feeling Fischer should win this game." (Evans)

33 ... ♖f7
34 g4 ♗f8
35 ♔h2 ♔h7
36 ♖c8 ♖b6



38 ... ♖f4?

The right concept is to destroy the blockade on e4 with 38...♖e3! 39 ♘c3 (if 39 ♘g3 ♖d3) 39...e4 40 ♖e8 ♗g7 41 ♘xe4 ♗e5+, etc.

39 ♗c7!

With his usual tenacity, Reshevsky finds the only move to keep the game alive. White is still quite lost, however.

39 ... ♖xe4
40 ♖xf8 ♖d3
41 ♖f6 ♖xg4
42 ♖xd6 ♖g7?

Now the 'technical difficulties' become more real than apparent. Correct is 42...♖d2! 43 ♖d7+ ♔g6 44 ♗xe5 ♖gxg2+ 45 ♔h3 ♖g5 winning easily.

43 ♖c6!

Forced. 43 ♗b6 loses to 43...♖d2. And 43 ♗a5 loses to 43...♖dg3.

43 ... ♖xd5

If 43...♖d2 44 ♗xe5 ♖gxg2+ 45 ♔h3 ♖g5 46 ♗f4 ♖d3+ 47 ♔h2 (if White plays 47 ♔h4?, the reply is 47...♖d4 48 ♖f6 ♔g7) 47...♖h5+ 48 ♔g2 ♖dxd5 49 ♖c7+! ♔g6 50 ♖c6+ draws.

44 ♖c2!

Again I had overlooked White's reply.

44 ... e4

Discouraged, I gave it one final try.

45 a5 ♖d3

On 45...e3, 46 ♗f4 ♖e7 47 ♖e2 draws.

46 ♗f4 ♖f7
47 g3 e3
48 ♖c1

Reshevsky, once more in severe time-pressure, overlooked that 48 ♔g2 draws easily. For on 48...♖xf4, 49 ♖c7+! is the saving clause.

48 ... ♖e7
49 ♖e1 ♖a3
50 ♖e2 ♔g6
51 ♔g2

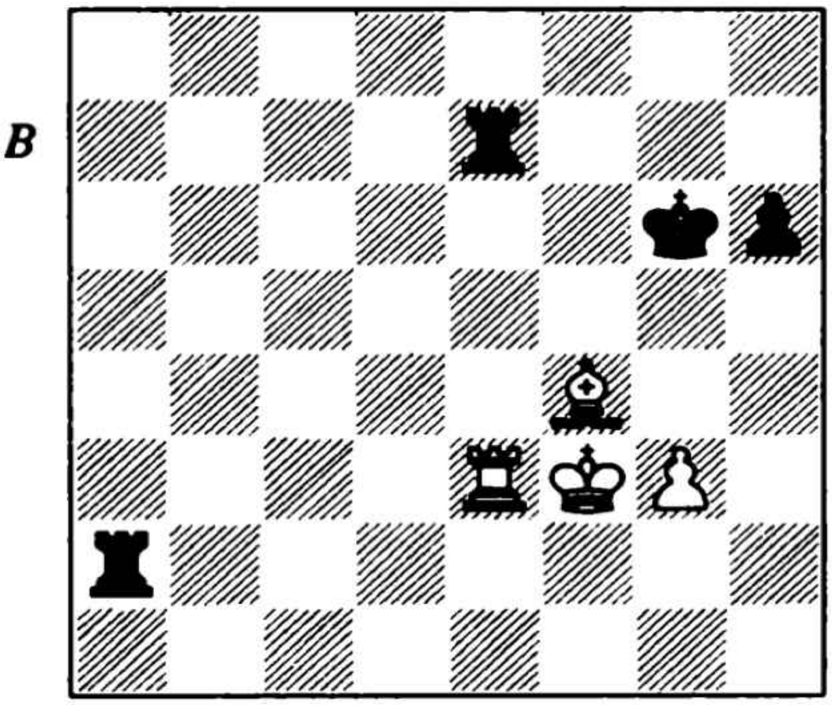
Not 51 ♗d6? ♖d7! 52 ♗xa3 ♖d2 winning.

51 ... ♖xa5
52 ♖xe3

52 ♗xe3 draws easily. Black can't make anything out of the pin on the e-file.

52 ... ♖a2+
53 ♔f3? *(D)*

A comedy of errors. Correct is 53 ♔h3! in order to keep Black's king out of g4 after the exchange of rooks, e.g. 53...♖xe3 54 ♗xe3 h5 55 ♗f4 ♖a1 56 ♗c7 ♔f5 57 ♗f4 ♖b1 58 ♗c7! ♖h1+ 59 ♔g2 ♖c1 60 ♗f4! (gaining a vital tempo by hitting the rook) 60...♖any 61 ♔h3! maintaining the blockade.



53 ... ♖b7?

Returning the favour. As Evans pointed out in *Chess Life*, "The best winning chance is 53...♖xe3+ 54 ♗xe3 h5 followed by ♔f5."

Disgusted, I no longer thought there was a win. However, later I worked out a problem-like variation (after 54...h5):

a) 55 g4? h4 wins.

b) 55 ♔e4 ♔f6! 56 ♗d4+ ♔e6 57 ♔f4 ♖a4 58 ♔e3 ♔f5 leads to variations similar to 'd'.

c) 55 ♔f4 ♖a5! 56 ♗d2 ♖f5+ 57 ♔e4 ♔f6 and Black's king will eventually penetrate to g4. For example, 58 ♗f4 (58 ♔e3? ♔g5) 58...♖a5 followed by ♖a4+ and ♔f5.

d) 55 ♗f4 ♔f5 56 ♗d6 ♖b2 57 ♗f4 ♖b3+ 58 ♔g2 ♔g4 59 ♗d6 ♖b2+ 60 ♔g1 ♔h3 61 ♗e5 ♖b4! 62 ♗c7 (not 62 ♗f4? h4) 62...♖g4! 63 ♔f2 ♔h2 64 ♗e5 ♔h1 65 ♔f3 ♖g8 66 ♗f4 ♖f8 67 ♔f2 (if 67 ♔e3 ♔g2) 67...h4 68 ♔f3 h3 69 ♔f2 h2 70 ♔f1 ♖a8 71 ♔f2 ♖a2+ 72 ♔f1 ♖a3! 73 ♔f2 ♖f3+!! 74 ♔xf3 ♔g1 75 ♗e3+ ♔f1 and the pawn queens.

54 ♖e6+ ♔f5
55 ♖e5+ ♔f6
56 ♖d5 ♖b3+
57 ♔g4 ½-½

Game 29

Fischer – Geller [USSR]

Bled 1961

Ruy Lopez

Hoist with his own petard

As was his wont, Geller gambles with 7...♕f6 in an attempt to assume an early offensive. To thwart this manoeuvre, part of a patently prepared variation, Fischer sacrifices a pawn (9 d4). Undaunted, Geller tries to continue his attack. But it backfires. With a series of rapier-like thrusts, Fischer demolishes Black in a mere twenty-two moves.

Subsequent attempts to improve on Geller's play have likewise failed. Thus, this fruitful encounter offers what has come to be accepted as the refutation of Black's ultra-aggressive system.

1 e4 e5
2 ♘f3 ♘c6
3 ♗b5 a6
4 ♗a4 d6
5 0-0

At that time this was considered inferior because it allows the pin which Black can initiate with his next move. 5 ♗xc6+ or 5 c3 were more standard. The text is more noncommittal. White can deploy his forces to greater effect after he gets a look at Black's reply.

5 ... ♗g4

This aggressive sally weakens Black's queenside.

6 h3!

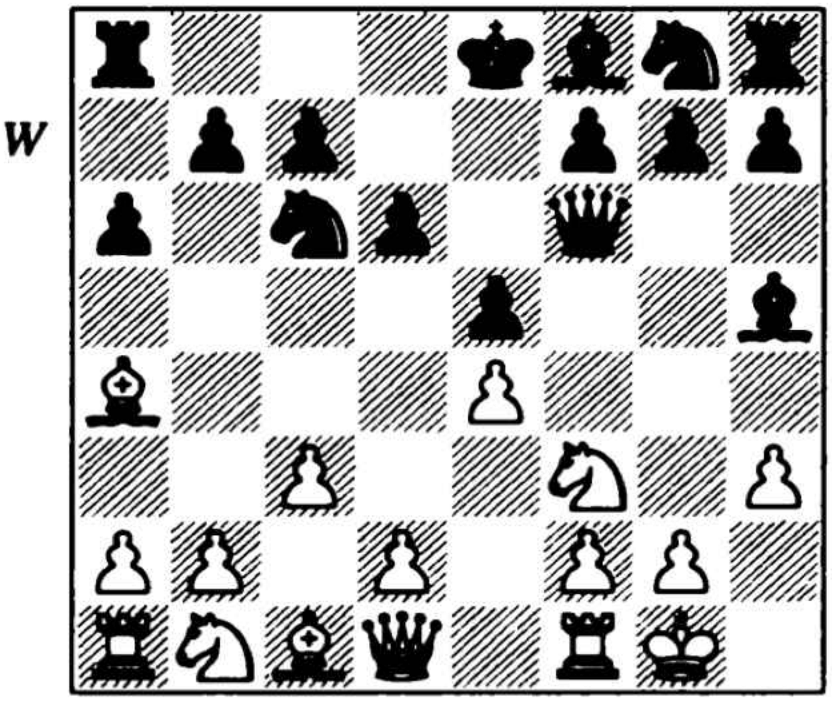
It's important to kick the bishop immediately, otherwise after ...♕f6 followed by ...♗xf3 White's pawn formation could be smashed.

6 ... ♗h5

As a result of this game 6...h5 became fashionable. I had intended 7 d4 b5 8 ♗b3 ♘xd4? (8...♕f6 is better) 9 hxg4 hxg4 10 ♘g5. Unclear is 7 c4!? b5 (if 7...♕f6 8 ♕b3! 0-0-0 9 ♗xc6 bxc6 10 hxg4 hxg4 11 ♘h2 ♕h6 12 ♕g3 but 11...d5! is dangerous, Zhuravlev; 7...♗d7 avoids the piece sac, but after 8 d4 White has a superior variation of the Duras Attack) 8 cxb5 ♘d4 9 bxa6+ c6 10 ♘xd4! ♗xd1 11 ♗xc6+ ♔e7 12 ♘f5+ ♔f6 13 ♗xa8 ♕xa8 14 ♖xd1 ♕xe4 15 ♘c3 ♕a8 16 ♘e3 ♕xa6 17 d4 ♔g6 18 b4 and White's passed queenside pawns should win; Grabczewski-Brzuska, Warsaw 1961.

7 c3 ♕f6? *(D)*

Geller looked quite happy after his novelty, but sounder is 7...♘f6 8 d4 ♘d7 bolstering the centre and the e5-pawn in particular.



8 g4!

I realised the danger inherent in weakening my kingside, but felt that I could capitalise on Black's lack of development (the traffic jam on his kingside) before he could get to my king.

8 ... ♗g6
9 d4!

It's worth a pawn to open up the game.

9 ... ♗xe4

What else? The threat was 10 ♗g5 followed by d5 winning a piece. He still looked happy.

10 ♘bd2 ♗g6

No better is 10...♗xf3 11 ♘xf3 e4 12 ♖e1 d5 13 ♗g5 ♕d6 (on 13...♕e6, 14 c4! is the bone-crusher; or 13...♕g6 14 ♕b3! b5 15 ♕xd5 bxa4 16 ♘e5 ♕e6 17 ♕xe6+ fxe6 18 ♘xc6 wins) 14 c4! dxc4 (if 14...f6, 15 cxd5 ♕xd5 16 ♗b3) 15 d5! b5 16 dxc6 bxa4 17 ♖xe4+ ♘e7 18 ♗xe7 ♗xe7 19 ♕e2 wins.

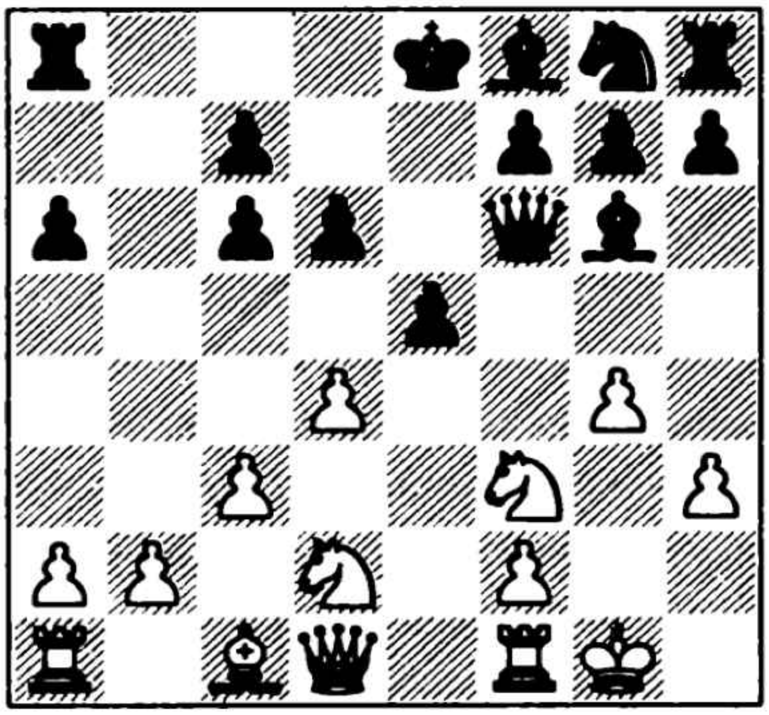
An attempt to rehabilitate Geller's line was made in Smyslov-Medina, Tel Aviv 1964, which continued: 10...♗d3 11 ♗xc6+ bxc6 12 ♖e1 0-0-0 but 13 ♖e3! proved to be very strong.

11 ♗xc6+

Trading old advantages for new. Now Black's queenside pawns are a shambles and his king can expect no shelter there.

11 ... bxc6 *(D)*

W



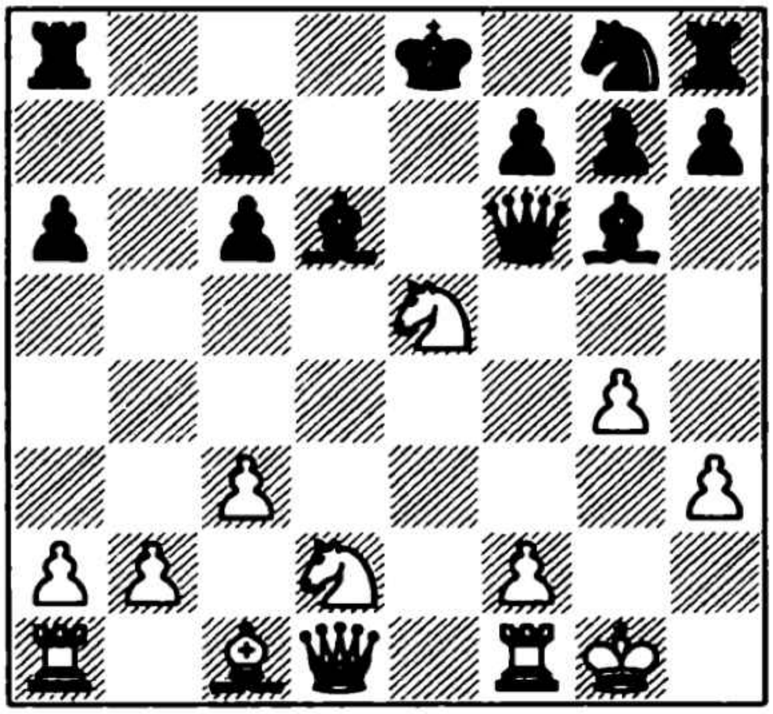
A few weeks after the game it dawned on me that 12 ♕a4 would have been a tremendous shot. After 12...♘e7 (apparently forced) 13 dxe5 dxe5 14 ♖e1 e4 15 ♘xe4 ♕xf3 16 ♕xc6+! ♘xc6 17 ♘f6++ ♔d8 18 ♖e8 mate. I was kicking myself for not having taken this course, but then I found that after 12 ♕a4 ♔d7! 13 dxe5 dxe5 14 ♘c4 ♗d6 White has no immediate way to exploit the exposed king.

12 ... dxe5

13 ♘xe5! ♗d6 *(D)*

On 13...0-0-0, 14 ♕e2 ♔b7 15 ♘b3 (intending ♘a5+) is deadly.

W



14 ♘xg6!

A little surprise, permitting him to open the h-file. Of course not 14 ♘xc6 h5.

14 ... ♕xg6

Geller took a half hour on this recapture and stopped looking happy. He rejected 14...hxg6 15 ♘e4 ♕h4 16 ♘xd6+ cxd6 17 ♕xd6 ♕xh3? 18

15 ♜e1+ ♚f8

Another difficult decision. After 15...♘e7 16 ♘c4 0-0-0 17 ♛a4 White's attack comes first.

16 ♘c4 h5

Still hoping to rise from the ashes and fan his attack.

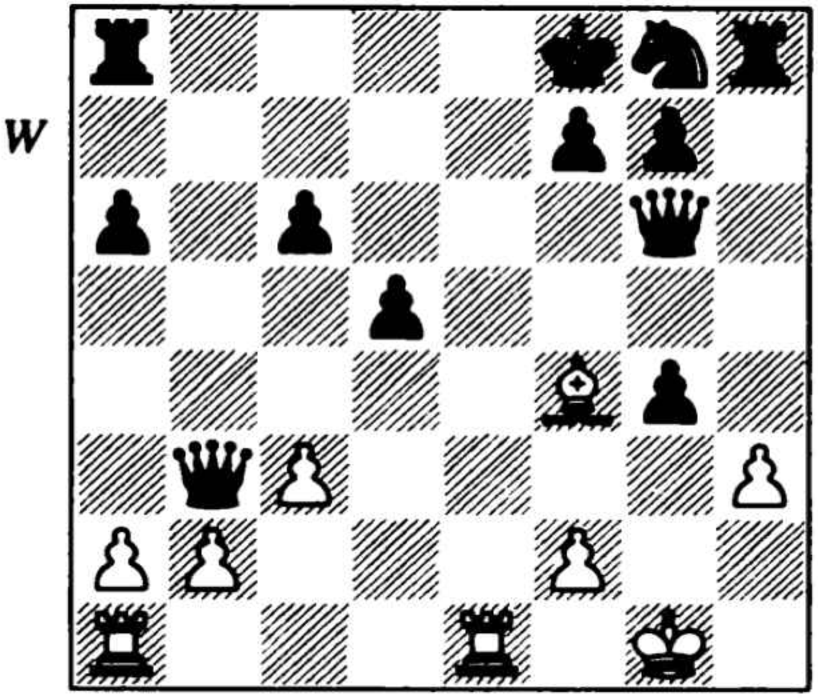
17 ♘xd6 cxd6

Black's best chance is to play 17...♛xd6.

18 ♗f4 d5?

Loses outright. In the post-mortem Tal tried to hold the game with 18...♜d8 19 ♛e2 hxg4 but after 20 hxg4 Black is in virtual zugzwang. If 20...♛h7?, 21 ♗xd6+ wins.

19 ♛b3 hxg4 *(D)*



Geller spent about forty minutes on this move. If 19...♘e7, 20 ♜xe7! ♚xe7 21 ♛b7+ wins. Or 19...♘f6 20 ♛b7 ♜e8 21 ♜xe8+ ♘xe8 22 ♜e1 ♛f6 23 ♛c8, etc.

20 ♛b7!

Even stronger than the more obvious 20 ♛b4+ ♘e7 21 ♛xe7+ ♚g8 22 h4, etc.

20 ... gxh3+
21 ♗g3 ♜d8
22 ♛b4+ 1-0

Game 30

Gligorić [Yugoslavia] – **Fischer**

Bled 1961

King's Indian Defence

A lyrical performance

This draw has the charm of perfection. Each move is interesting and, to this day, appears flawless.

With 17...c5 Fischer launches an intricate double-pawn sacrifice which involves exact timing. Gligorić rises to the occasion, returning material in an attempt to wrest the advantage. The economy and ingenuity displayed by both players produces an harmonious flow of movement, remarkable in its aesthetic appeal. The effect is of a *pas de deux* in which each partner contributes equally to the total symmetry.

1 d4 ♘f6
2 c4 g6
3 ♘c3 ♗g7
4 e4 d6
5 ♘f3 0-0
6 ♗e2 e5
7 0-0 ♘c6
8 d5 ♘e7
9 ♘e1 ♘d7
10 ♘d3

The older 10 f3 f5 11 ♗e3 f4 12 ♗f2 g5 has been abandoned. Black's kingside attack has practically been worked out to a forced mate!

10 ... f5

11 exf5

Petrosian-Tal, in this same tournament, continued (with Black's knight on e8): 11 f4 exf4 12 ♗xf4 fxe4 13 ♘xe4 ♘f5 14 ♗g5 ♘f6 15 g4 ♘d4 16 ♘df2 ♕e7 =.

11 ... ♘xf5

In this line White gets a grip on e4, Black on d4. 11...gxf5 is more energetic.

12 f3 ♘f6

For 12...♘d4 see Game 28. Both moves give Black a nice game.

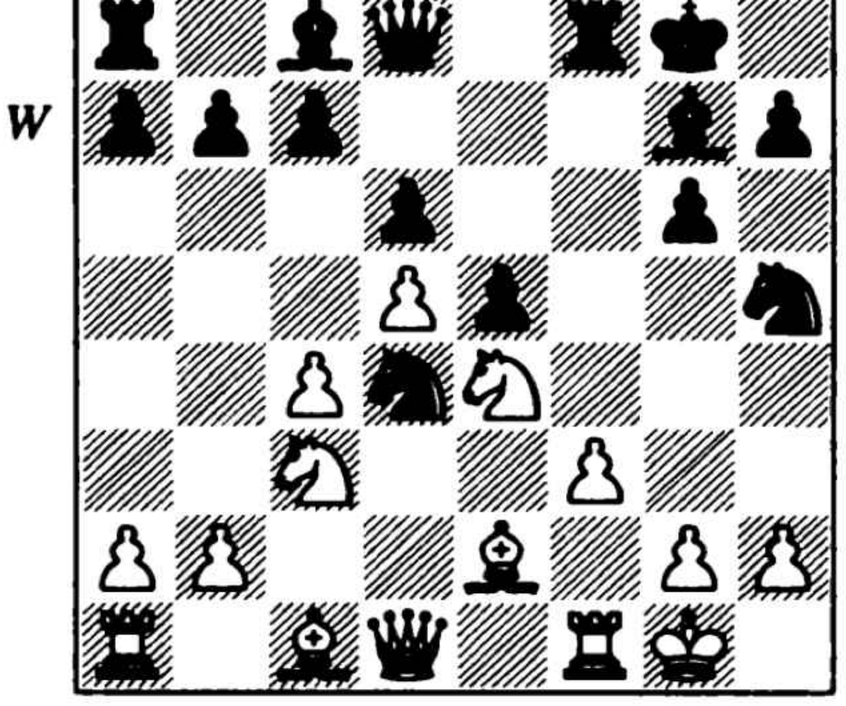
13 ♘f2 ♘d4

14 ♘fe4 ♘h5 *(D)*

White has the c5 lever; Black has the dynamic break with ...g5-g4. Chances are roughly even.

15 ♗g5 ♕d7

Keeping an eye on the d-pawn in order to retain the option of playing ...c5.



In a later round Gligorić (as Black) played against Tal 16...c5? but after 17 ♘b5! ♘xb5 18 cxb5 White obtained a bind.

17 ♗e3 c5!

I was informed that Gligorić thought I had blundered a pawn, but it is a deliberate sac. White has it all his own way after 17...♘xe2+ 18 ♕xe2 g5 19 c5.

18 ♗xd4

Not 18 ♘b5 ♘f5 19 ♗d2 a6, etc.

18 ... exd4

19 ♘b5 a6

Not 19...♗e5? 20 f4.

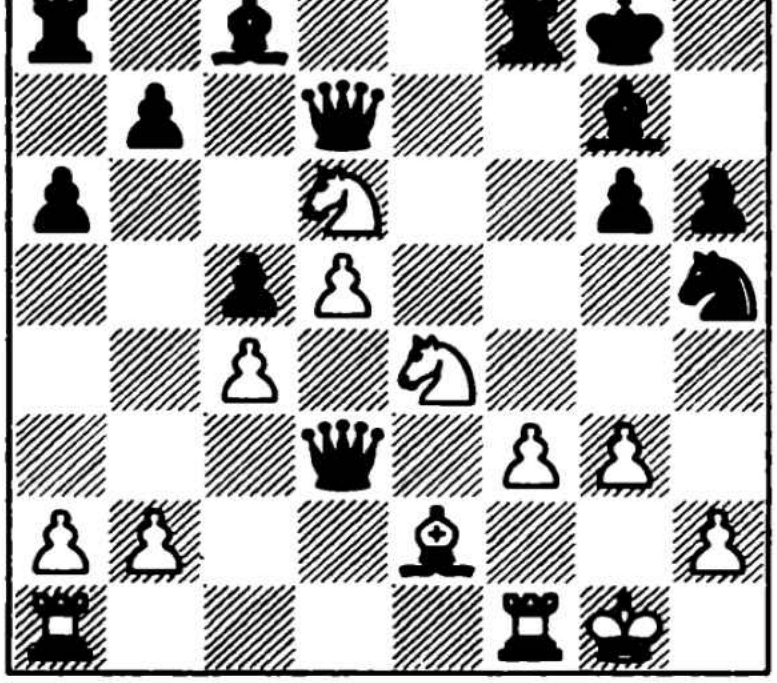
20 ♘bxd6

Apparently Black has lost a pawn without any visible compensation. His pieces, which are now so awkwardly placed, soon spring to life, however.

20 ... d3!

21 ♕xd3 *(D)*

A double-edged game would result from 21 ♗xd3 ♗d4+ 22 ♔h1 ♘xg3+ 23 ♘xg3 ♕xd6 24 ♕c2


B

21 ... ♗d4+

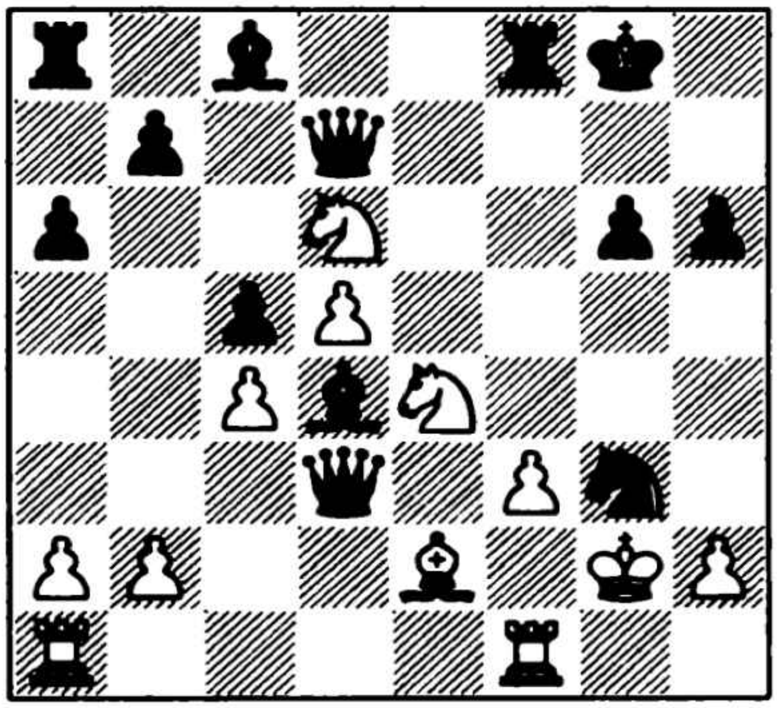
The combination requires intricate footwork. A mistake would be 21...♗xb2 22 ♘xc8 ♗xa1 23 ♘b6 and it's all over (23...♗d4+? 24 ♕xd4).

22 ♔g2

After 22 ♔h1 ♘xg3+ 23 ♘xg3 ♕xd6 White has multiple weaknesses and his kingside looks like Swiss cheese. Chances would be balanced.

22 ... ♘xg3! *(D)*

This is the resource it was necessary to visualise as far back as move 17.


W

23 ♘xc8!

Best. Not 23 hxg3? (or 23 ♔xg3) 23...♕h3 mate. 23 ♘xg3 ♕xd6 is again good for Black.

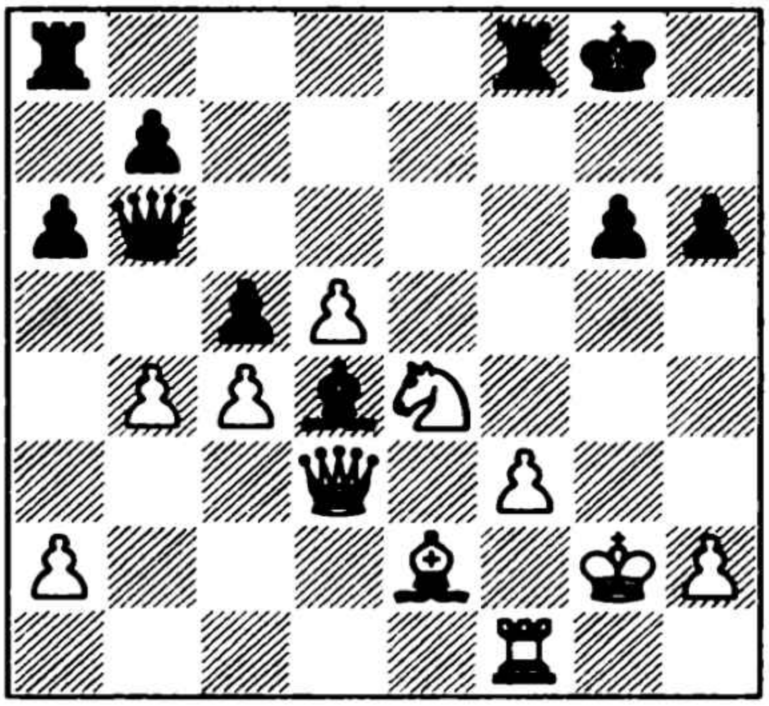
23 ... ♘xf1

24 ♘b6! ♕c7!

Blow for blow! The threat of mate on h2 allows Black to keep the exchange.

25 ♖xf1 ♕xb6

26 b4! *(D)*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The saving clause.

26 ... ♕xb4

I saw the draw coming but felt the position was too precarious to play for a win. On 26...cxb4, 27 c5! ♗xc5 28 ♘xc5 ♕xc5 29 ♕xg6+ ♔h8 30 ♕xh6+ ♔g8 31 ♔h1 wins. The only other try is 26...♖f7 27 bxc5 ♗xc5 28 ♖b1 followed by d6 with tons of play.

27 ♖b1 ♕a5

28 ♘xc5

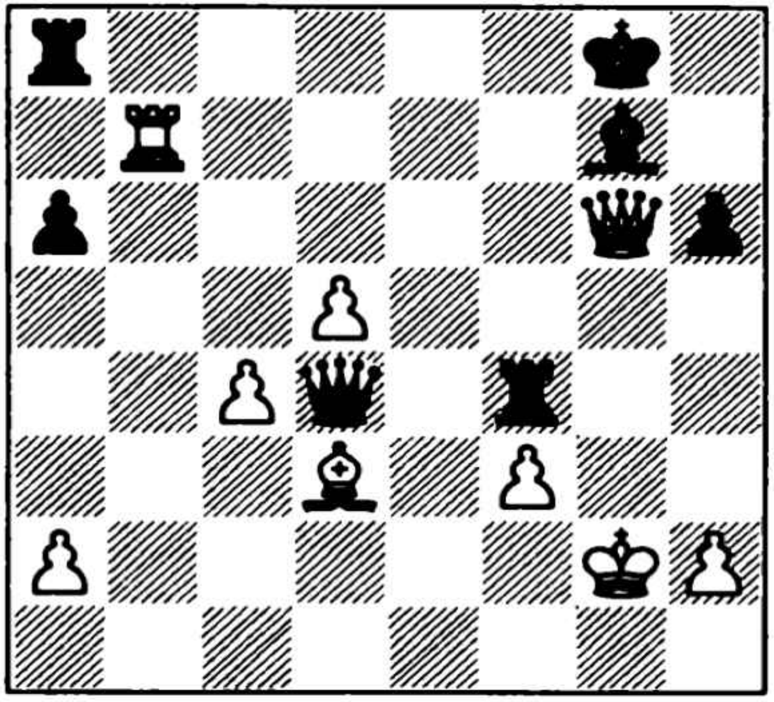
After 28 ♖xb7 ♖f7 Black defends.

28 ... ♕xc5

29 ♕xg6+ ♗g7
30 ♖xb7 ♕d4

The only move. Gligorić was so sure I'd 'find' it that he wrote it down on his scoresheet while I was taking a minute to look for something better.

31 ♗d3 ♖f4 *(D)*
32 ♕e6+ ♔h8
33 ♕g6 ½-½



Game 31

Fischer – Petrosian [USSR]

Bled 1961

Caro-Kann Defence

The sincerest form of flattery

This was Fischer's only win against Petrosian before 1970 and it was achieved through an unconscious mimicry of the latter's style. Right up to the endgame Fischer seems content to return the ball without trying to force the issue. Each attempt to seize the initiative is meticulously rebuffed. Move by move, they seem to be drifting toward a draw. Petrosian offers one at move 27, but Fischer declines. Perhaps out of irritation, Petrosian immediately commits his first and only error. And Fischer, reverting to his normal style of play, takes full advantage of it.

1 e4 c6
2 d4

For 2 ♘c3 see Game 16.

2 ... d5
3 ♘c3

For 3 exd5 see Game 20.

3 ... dxe4
4 ♘xe4 ♘d7

For 4...♗f5 see Game 49.

5 ♘f3

5 ♕e2 ♘df6 (weaker is 5...♘gf6 6 ♘d6 mate) gives White nothing. I tried 5 ♗c4 against Portisch at Stockholm 1962, which continued: 5...♘gf6 6 ♘g5 ♘d5 (the idea is to omit the usual ...e6 until after the

queen's bishop has been developed) 7 ♘1f3 h6 8 ♘e4 ♘7b6 9 ♗b3 (better is 9 ♗d3 ♘b4 10 0-0 ♘xd3 11 ♕xd3 e6 12 ♘e5! with pressure) 9...♗f5 10 ♘g3 ♗h7 11 0-0 e6 =.

5 ... ♘gf6

6 ♘xf6+

The knight is not particularly well placed after 6 ♘g3.

6 ... ♘xf6

7 ♗c4 ♗f5

8 ♕e2 e6

9 ♗g5 ♗g4!

This super-refinement reduces all of White's attacking prospects. Petrosian has a knack of snuffing out such dreams twenty moves before they even enter his opponent's head! After 9...♗e7 10 0-0-0 h6 11 ♗h4 ♘e4!? 12 g4 ♗h7 13 ♗g3 ♘xg3 14 fxg3 ♕c7 15 ♘e5 ♗d6 16 h4 keeps the initiative; Tal-Fuster, Portorož IZ 1958.

10 0-0-0 ♗e7

11 h3

It might have been better to prevent further simplifications with 11 ♔b1 ♘d5 12 ♗c1! 0-0 (and not 12...♗xf3 13 ♕xf3 ♗g5 14 ♕g3!) 13 ♗d3, etc.

11 ... ♗xf3

12 ♕xf3 ♘d5!

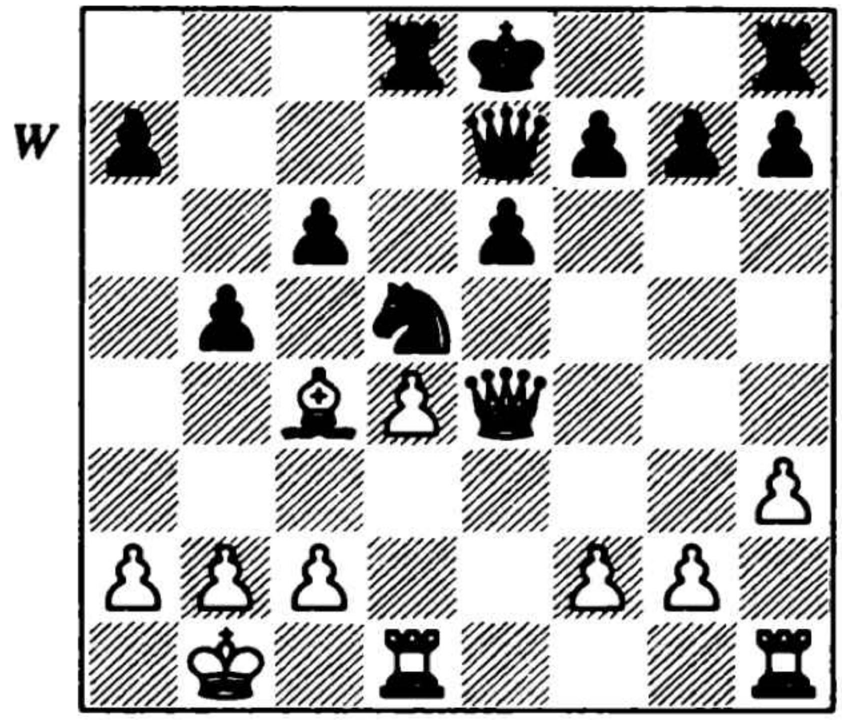
Forces an exchange of bishops, e.g. 13 ♗d2 ♗g5, etc.

13 ♗xe7 ♕xe7

14 ♔b1 ♖d8

I had expected 14...0-0-0.

Now it's apparent why Black didn't castle long. He wants to drum up counterplay on the queenside, which he couldn't do if his king lived there.



16 ♗d3 a5

17 c3

The threat was ...a4-a3. Weaker is 17 a3 b4. Already White has been thrown on a mild defensive.

17 ... ♕d6

17...a4 would be met by 18 a3, preventing the a-pawn's advance.

18 g3

I thought he wanted to exchange queens.

18 ... b4!

19 c4

Practically forced—but now the d-pawn is weak.

19 ... ♘f6

20 ♕e5

After 20 ♕e2 0-0 (if 20...♕xd4 21 ♗xh7) 21 ♗c2 c5 White could easily end up with the bad bishop.

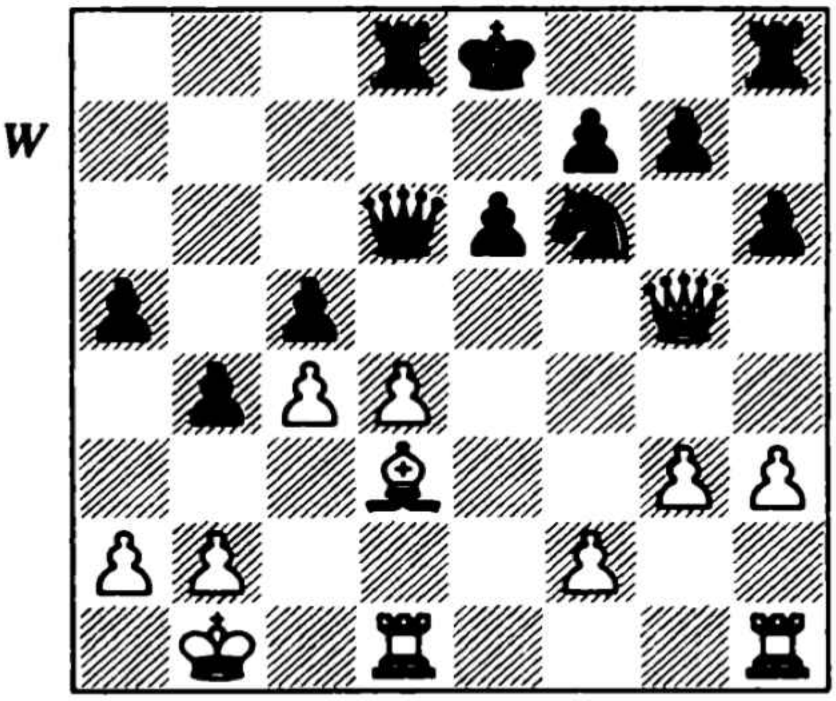
20...♕xe5 21 dxe5 ♘d7 22 f4 ♘c5 produces a drawn ending. And not 20...♕xd4 21 ♕xa5.

21 ♕g5

This looked like a shot—

21 ... h6! *(D)*

—but instead it's a shock.



22 ♕xc5

Now I saw 22 ♕xg7 ♔e7! 23 dxc5 ♕c6! (not 23...♕xc5 24 ♖he1 ♖dg8 25 ♖xe6+! ♔xe6 26 ♖e1+ and White should win) 24 ♗g6 (forced) 24...♖df8 25 ♗xf7 ♕e4+! 26 ♔a1 ♖h7! and Black wins.

22 ... ♕xc5

23 dxc5 ♔e7

23...♖c8 immediately is also good.

24 c6 ♖d6

25 ♖he1 ♖xc6

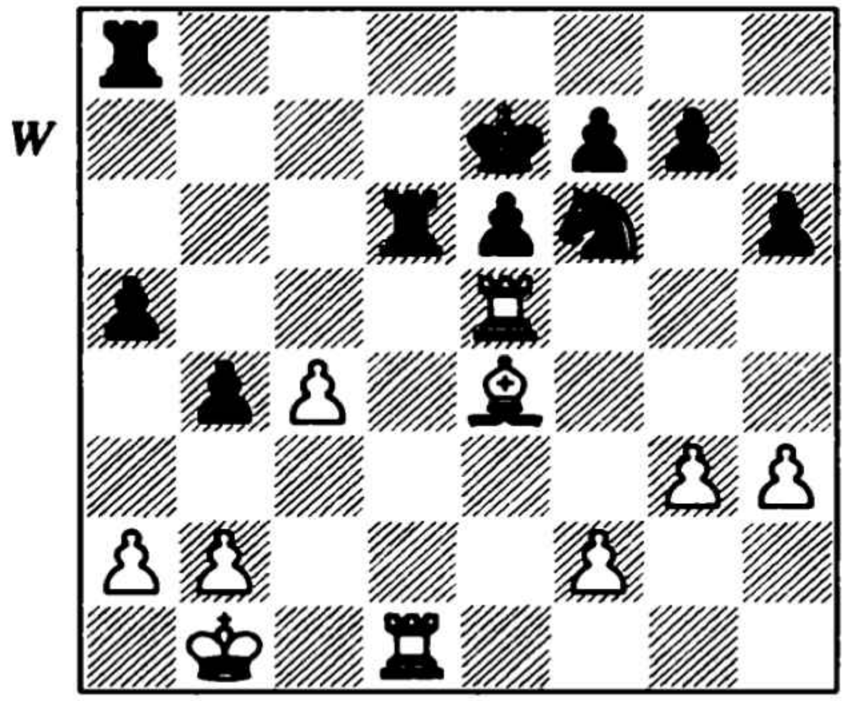
26 ♖e5 ♖a8

27 ♗e4

After 27 ♖b5 ♖a7 followed by ...♘d7-c5 Black's solid as a rock. Right after I made this move, Petrosian offered a draw. I was ready to accept, but Tal happened to be standing there at that instant, hovering anxiously, since a drawn result would practically clinch first place for him. So I refused—not because I thought White has anything in the position, but because I didn't want to give Tal the satisfaction!

27 ... ♖d6 *(D)*

Serendipity. Simply 27...♘xe4 leads to a dead draw.



28 ♗xa8

This obvious capture shattered Petrosian, who apparently had been engrossed in analysing the intricacies of 28 ♖xd6 ♔xd6 29 ♖xe6+ fxe6 30 ♗xa8 ♔c5 31 b3 ♘d7 32 ♔c2 ♔d4 with an absolute bind on the dark squares.

28 ... ♖xd1+

29 ♔c2 ♖f1

There's no turning back. If 29...♖d8, then 30 ♖xa5 wins.

30 ♖xa5 ♖xf2+

31 ♔b3 ♖h2

32 c5 ♔d8

On 32...♖xh3 33 ♖a7+ ♔d8 34 ♖xf7 ♖xg3+ 35 ♔xb4 the queenside pawns hurtle toward a touchdown. The bishop, since it can control both wings at once, is vastly superior to the knight.

33 ♖b5!

Not 33 ♖a7 ♘d7! 34 c6 ♘b6, which holds for Black.

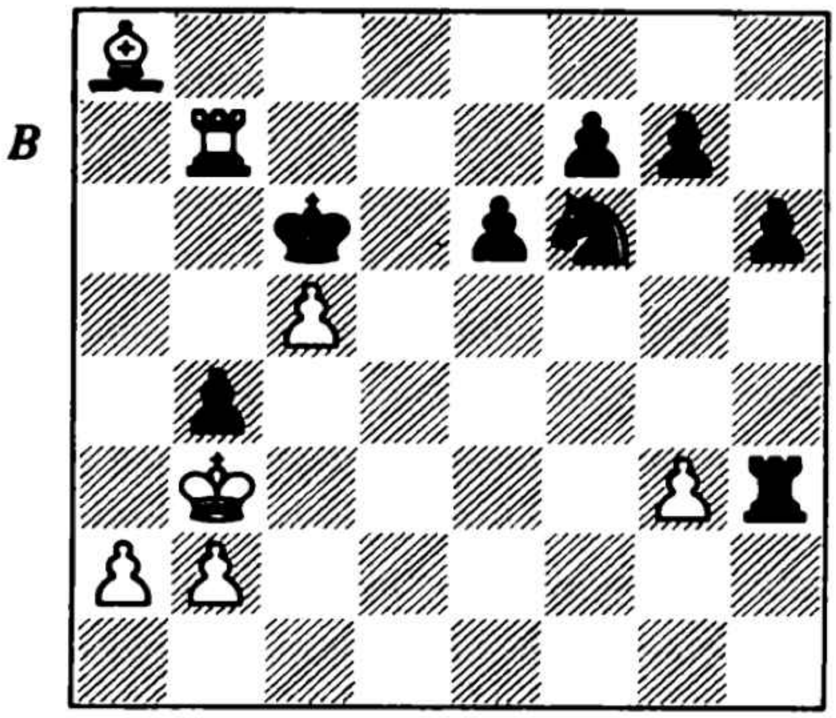
33 ... ♖xh3

Now 33...♘d7 can be refuted by 34 c6.

34 ♖b8+ ♔c7

Or 34...♔e7 35 ♔xb4 (not 35 c6? ♘d5) 35...♖xg3 36 a4 wins.

35 ♖b7+ ♔c6 *(D)*



I suspect Petrosian saw White's reply, but wanted to be put out of his misery. 35...♔c8 36 ♖xf7 ♖xg3+ 37 ♔xb4 is futile.

36 ♔c4! 1-0

Game 32

Fischer – Tal [USSR]

Bled 1961

Sicilian Defence

The moral victor

After an early lapse by Tal on move 6, Fischer relentlessly presses home his advantage. He misses several opportunities to shorten Tal's resistance, but the outcome is never really in doubt.

"Finally, he has not escaped me!" exulted Fischer.

"It is difficult to play against Einstein's theory", sighed Tal, who went on to capture first prize.

But it was Fischer, finishing a strong second, who had the consolation of scoring 3½ out of 4 against the Russian contingent, and of being the only player (in a field of twenty) to emerge undefeated.

5 ♘c3

No doubt Tal expected 5 ♘b5, which I had played exclusively at Buenos Aires 1960. I still think that might be best (see Game 54).

5 ... ♛c7

6 g3

A perfectly legitimate treatment which Botvinnik labelled a 'very cunning and well-masked idea'. Actually no trap is intended. It becomes one only by virtue of Tal's reply.

6 ... ♘f6?

Probably the losing move! Tal looked worried immediately after having made it, but I'm not sure he was convinced he had really been careless. Correct is 6...a6 7 ♗g2 ♘f6 8 0-0, etc.

7 ♘db5!

Curiously enough, Bisguier, who was present at Bled and witnessed this game, forgot this move when he reached the identical position against Benko at San Antonio, 1962!

7 ... ♛b8

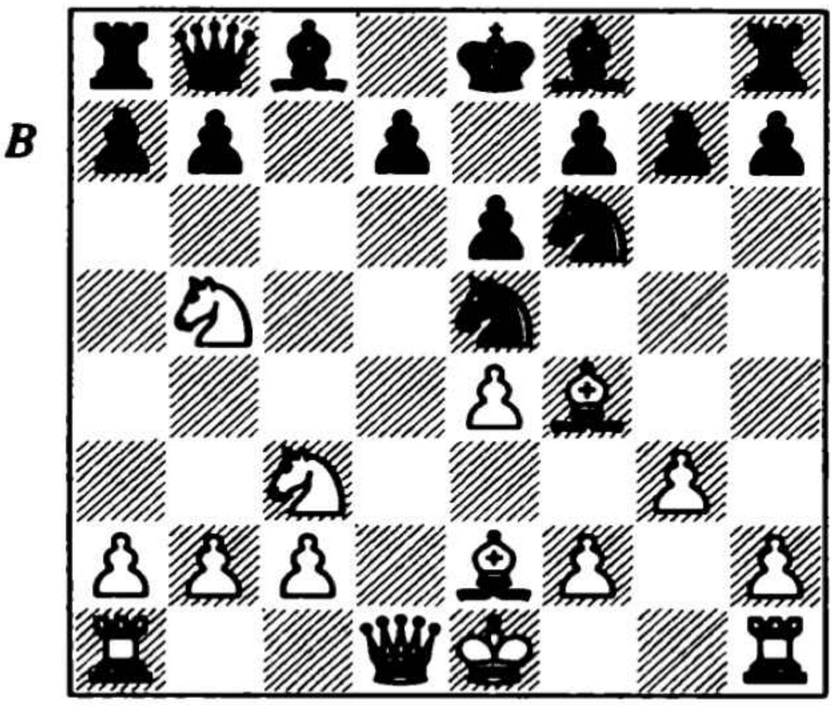
On 7...♛a5, 8 ♗d2 ♛d8 9 ♗f4 e5 10 ♗g5 is strong.

8 ♗f4 ♘e5

Tal took a long time on this risky reply. The alternative 8...e5 9 ♗g5 a6 10 ♗xf6 (not 10 ♘a3 b5 11 ♗xf6 b4!) 10...axb5 (not 10...gxf6 11 ♘a3 b5 12 ♘d5) 11 ♗g5 gives White a clear advantage.

9 ♗e2! *(D)*

Perhaps Tal underestimated this simple move. By defending f3 it prepares ♛d4, and it keeps an eye on the b5 square.



On 9...a6, 10 ♛d4 d6 11 ♜d1 axb5 12 ♗xe5 wins at least a pawn. Or 9...d6 10 ♛d4 ♘c6 11 ♘xd6+ (Tal pointed out 11 ♛xd6! ♗xd6 12 ♗xd6) 11...♚d7 12 ♗b5 ♗xd6 13 0-0-0, etc.

In the tournament book Tal suggested the rather startling 9...♘g8 to avoid material loss. Then 10 ♛d4 f6 11 0-0-0 (11 ♗xe5 dxe5 12 ♛c4 ♚d8! holds) 11...a6 12 ♘d6+ ♗xd6 13 ♛xd6 ♛xd6 14 ♜xd6 leads to a promising endgame.

9 ... ♗c5

10 ♗xe5! ♛xe5

11 f4 ♛b8

12 e5 a6

Tal didn't give this a second thought. On 12...♘g8, 13 ♘e4 ♗e7 14 ♛d2 followed by ♘bd6+ and 0-0-0 is crushing.

13 exf6 axb5

14 fxg7

Keres thought 14 ♘e4 ♗f8 15

♕d4 was stronger. But I wanted the pawn. With only two draws against Tal, out of six times at bat, I was in no mood to speculate!

14 ... ♖g8
15 ♘e4 ♗e7
16 ♕d4 ♖a4

A desperate attempt to complicate. 16...♕c7 (Botvinnik) held out more chance for survival.

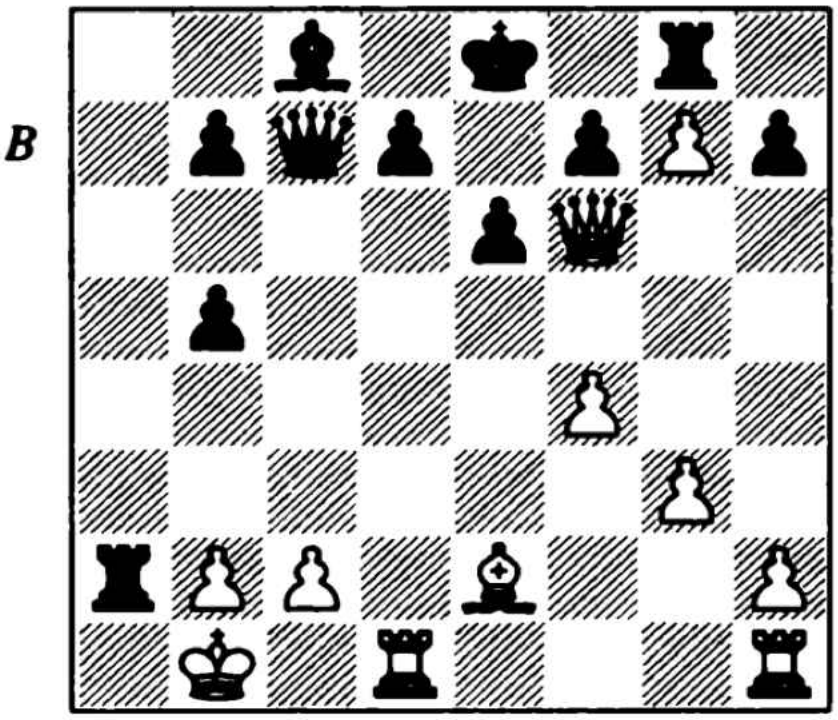
17 ♘f6+ ♗xf6

17...♔d8? loses to 18 ♕b6+.

18 ♕xf6 ♕c7
19 0-0-0!

19 ♗h5 is answered by 19...d5, and 19 ♗xb5? by 19...♕a5+ winning a piece.

19 ... ♖xa2
20 ♔b1 *(D)*



20 ... ♖a6

Not 20...♖a5 since 21 ♗h5 d5 (if 21...d6 22 ♖xd6!) 22 ♖xd5! exd5 23 ♖e1+ wins outright.

Also bad is 20...♕a5 21 b3! and the threat of ♗h5 is decisive.

I was so intent on snatching material and not botching this one that I missed 21 ♗h5 d6 (or 21...d5 22 ♖xd5!) 22 ♖he1 ♕e7 23 ♕h6 ♔d7 24 ♕xh7 with a quick win in view.

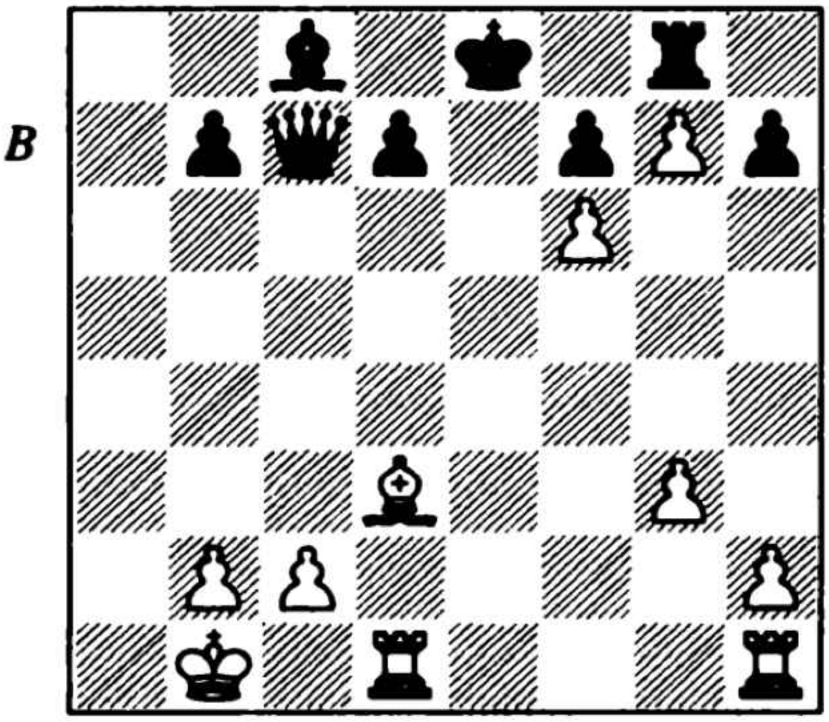
21 ... ♖b6
22 ♗d3 e5

The best chance. On 22...♕d8, 23 ♕h6 f5 24 ♕h5+ ♔e7 25 g4 cracks Black open.

23 fxe5!

Black was hoping for 23 ♕xe5+ ♕xe5 24 fxe5 ♖xg7 with some drawing prospects, even though a pawn behind. In top-flight chess, you have to drive your advantage home unmercifully.

23 ... ♖xf6
24 exf6 *(D)*



The threat is simply ♗xh7.

24 ... ♕c5

The only move. On 24...♕b6, 25 ♖hf1 wins easily.

25 ♗xh7 ♕g5

27 ♖hf1 ♕xg7

28 ♗xf7+ ♔d8

Black has succeeded in staving off immediate defeat, but the endgame is hopeless.

29 ♗e6 ♕h6

On 29...♔c7, 30 ♗f5 maintains the pressure.

30 ♗xd7 ♗xd7

31 ♖f7 ♕xh2

32 ♖dxd7+ ♔e8

33 ♖de7+ ♔d8

34 ♖d7+ ♔c8

35 ♖c7+ ♔d8

36 ♖fd7+ ♔e8

37 ♖d1

White has been gaining time on the clock.

37 ... b5

38 ♖b7 ♕h5

38...♕xg3 39 ♖xb5 is equally convincing.

39 g4 ♕h3

Or 39...♕xg4 40 ♖h1 ♕d4 41 ♖h8+! ♕xh8 42 ♖b8+ wins.

40 g5 ♕f3

41 ♖e1+ ♔f8

42 ♖xb5 ♔g7

43 ♖b6 ♕g3

44 ♖d1 ♕c7

45 ♖dd6

White is threatening 46 ♖g6+ ♔h7 47 ♖h6+ ♔g7 48 ♖bg6+ ♔f8 49 ♖h8+ ♔f7 50 ♖h7+ winning the queen.

45 ... ♕c8

45...♕c5 46 ♖b7+ ♔any 47 ♖d8 mate.

46 b3 ♔h7

47 ♖a6 1-0

Black must submit to the loss of his queen or get mated. There is no defence against 48 ♖a7+ ♔g8 49 ♖dd7, etc.

Game 33

Fischer – Trifunović [Yugoslavia]

Bled 1961

Ruy Lopez

The drawing master

Trifunović has earned the reputation of being a very hard man to beat, and the other grandmasters have acquired a healthy respect for his technical skill. At Bled, for example, he lost only this one game.

Trifunović's experiment with a dubious line in the opening meets with an abrupt and effective antidote (13 ♘xd4) saddling him with an isolated e-pawn for the duration of the middlegame. He decides, perhaps unwisely, to sacrifice it at an appropriate moment to gain some counterplay. Although he succeeds in outplaying Fischer in the endgame, he cannot overcome his material deficit. What ultimately defeats him is *force majeure*.

1 e4 e5
2 ♘f3 ♘c6
3 ♗b5 a6
4 ♗a4 ♘f6
5 0-0 ♘xe4
6 d4 b5
7 ♗b3 exd4?

Considered to be weak, and it is. But Trifunović must have had some equalising idea in mind, since he rarely chooses a genuinely risky line. The tried and tested 6...d5 must be played.

8 ♖e1

A reader of Tal's Latvian chess magazine (*Shakhmaty*) suggested 8 ♘xd4 but 8...♘e7! seems to hold: e.g. 9 ♖e1 (9 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 10 ♕f3+ ♔g8 11 ♕xe4 d5 is adequate for Black) 9...d5 10 ♘c6! ♘xc6 11 ♗xd5 ♗b7! 12 ♗xe4 ♗e7 13 ♗xc6+ ♗xc6 14 ♕e2 ♔f8, etc.

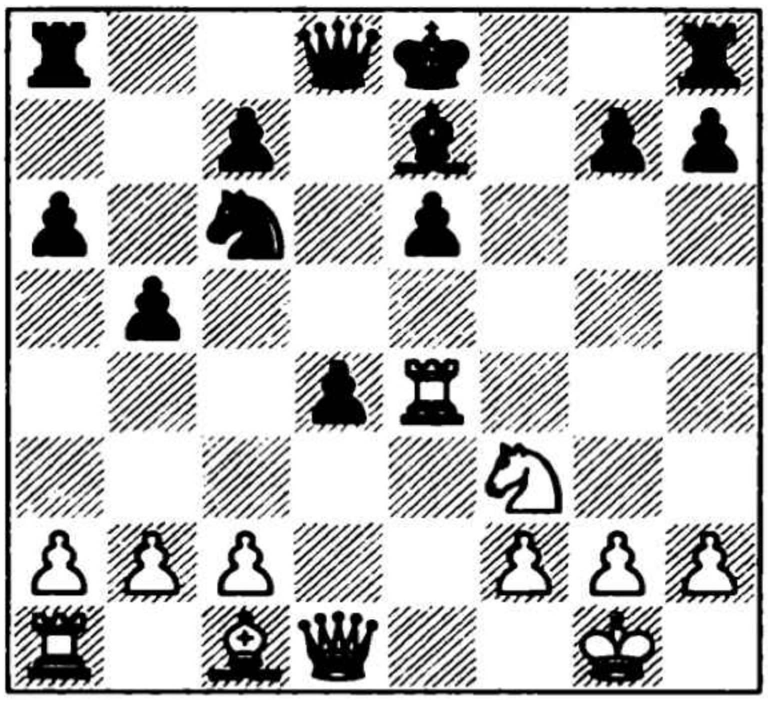
8 ... d5
9 ♘c3!

Not 9 ♘xd4? ♘xd4 10 ♕xd4 ♗e6 (threatening ...c5) with advantage for Black.

9 ... ♗e6

On 9...dxc3, 10 ♗xd5 ♗b7 11 ♗xe4 (not 11 ♖xe4+? ♘e7!) 11...♗e7 (11...♕xd1? loses to 12 ♗xc6++) 12 ♕e2 prevents Black from castling.

10 ♘xe4 dxe4
11 ♖xe4 ♗e7
12 ♗xe6 fxe6 *(D)*



13 ♘xd4!

An improvement over the 'book' line. Trifunović probably expected the usual 13 ♖xe6 but after 13...♕d5! 14 ♕e2 0-0 15 ♖xe7 ♘xe7 16 ♕xe7 ♖ae8 17 ♕xc7 ♖f7 18 ♕g3 ♖xf3! 19 gxf3 ♖e1+ 20 ♔g2 ♕c4 21 ♔h3 ♕e6+ 22 ♕g4 ♕c6 the game was shortly drawn in Dolodonov-Kicin, USSR corres. 1965.

13 ... 0-0

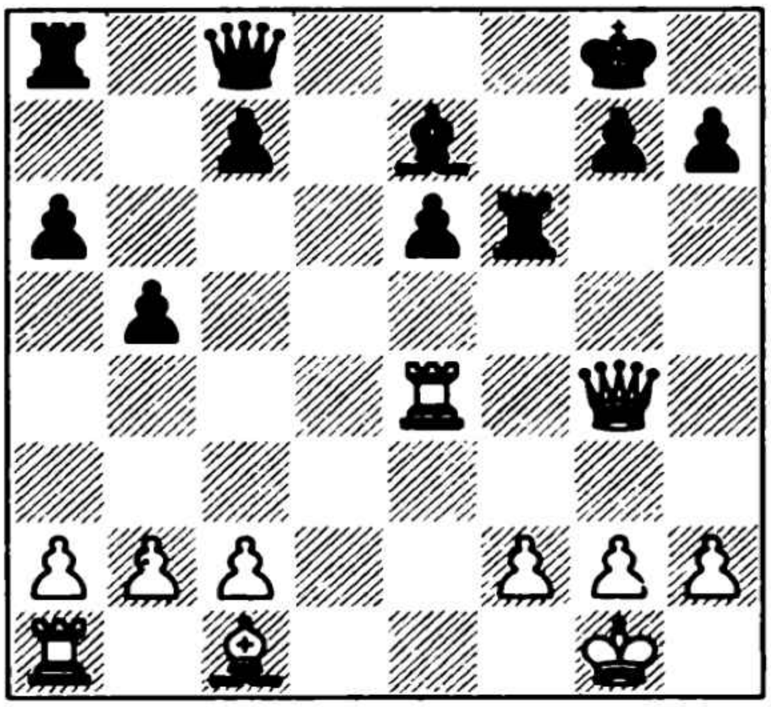
He thought quite a while on this. Weak is 13...e5? 14 ♕h5+ g6 15 ♘xc6, etc. On 13...♕d5 14 ♕g4 0-0-0 15 ♗e3 Black's e-pawn is untenable. Finally the 'simplifying combination' 13...♘xd4 14 ♖xd4 ♕xd4? 15 ♕xd4 ♖d8 falls short after 16 ♕g4.

14 ♕g4 ♘xd4
15 ♖xd4 ♕c8

16 ♖e4 ♖f6 *(D)*

White has a strategically won game, but the technical problems are considerable. Moreover a tempting trap now stared me in the face.

W



17 ♗e3

Keres suggests 17 ♗f4 in the tournament book, but 17...♗d6 is an adequate reply.

I was considering the blunder 17 ♗g5? ♖g6 18 h4 h6 19 ♕h5 but Trifunović seemed too quiet all of a sudden, and I suspected he had tuned in on my brain waves. At the last minute I saw 19...♕e8! wins; for if 20 ♗xe7 ♖xg2+! 21 ♔xg2 ♕xh5.

17 ... ♕d7
18 ♖d1 ♕c6
19 ♗d4 ♖g6
20 ♕e2 ♖d8
21 g3 ♕d5

Threatening ...c5.

22 ♖e1! c5

Black's welcome to 22...♕xa2 23 b3 ♕a5 (otherwise ♖a1) 24 ♖xe6 with a crushing attack.

23 ♖e5 ♕d6
24 ♗e5 ♖d8
25 ♗f4!

Preventing ...♕d2.

25 ... c4

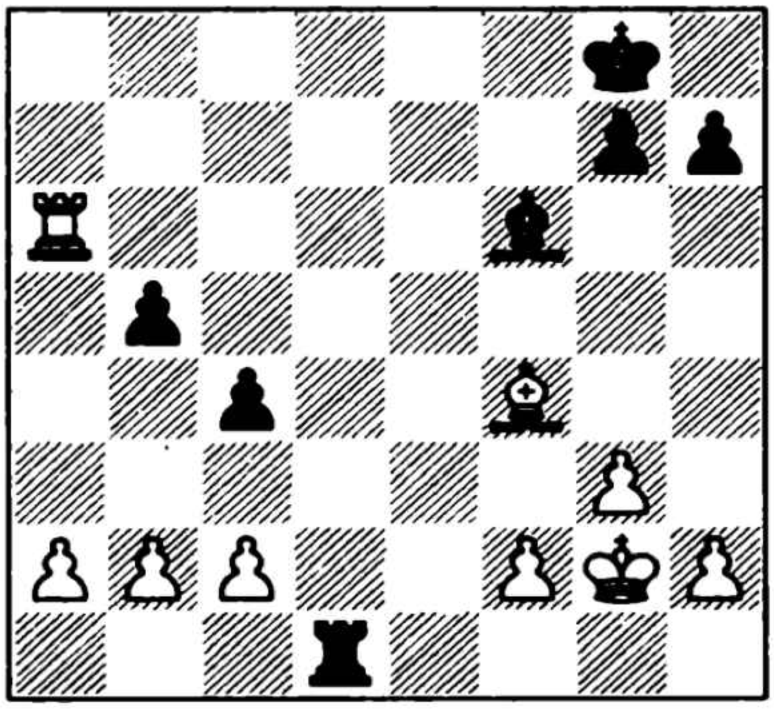
Again 25...♕xa2 is met by 26 b3 followed by ♖xe6.

Black decides to sacrifice his e-pawn in order to get some activity.

After 25...♔f7, 26 b3 (threatening a4 at the right moment) leaves Black with little to do but sit back and wonder where White will penetrate next.

26 ♖xe6 ♖xe6
27 ♕xe6+ ♕xe6
28 ♖xe6 ♗f6
29 ♖xa6 ♖d1+
30 ♔g2 *(D)*

B



30 ... ♗xb2

After the game Gligorić suggested that 30...♖b1! offered drawing chances. It makes things harder, but White should win after 31 a4! (not 31 b3 ♖b2) 31...♖xb2 (if 31...b4, then 32 ♖c6 ♖xb2 33 ♖xc4 ♗c3 34 ♗d6!) 32 axb5 ♖xb5 33 ♖c6 c3 34 ♖e6 ♔f7 35 ♖e2 and eventually White's king marches to d3 and, after trading bishops, captures the weak c-pawn.

31 **♖b6** **♖a1**
32 **♖xb5** **♖xa2**
33 **♖c5** **♖a4**

On 33...c3, 34 ♗e5 ♗a1 35 ♖c7 ♖xc2 36 ♖xg7+ ♔f8 37 ♖c7 leads to an easy win. Black's c-pawn isn't going anywhere.

34 **♗e5** **♗xe5**
35 **♖xe5** **♖a2**

On 35...♖a3, 36 ♖e3! ♖a2 37 ♖c3 wins.

36 **♖e2** **♔f7**
37 **♔f3** **♔f6**
38 **♔e4** **g5**
39 **♔d4** **♔f5**
40 **f3**

While not bad in itself, the text indicates a wrong frame of mind. White should be looking for the quickest win, not ways to prolong Black's agony.

40 ♔xc4 ♔g4 41 ♔b3 is easy.

40 **...** **c3!**
41 **♖f2?**

The simplest path is 41 ♔xc3 ♖a3+ 42 ♔d4 ♖xf3 43 c4, etc. (Keres). Curiously now, I never do win his c-pawn!

41 **...** **♖a3**
42 **♔c4** **h5**
43 **♔b4** **♖a8**
44 **f4**

44 ♔xc3 h4 offers a few little

44 **...** **♔e4!**

I hadn't seen this defence. Now Black saves his c-pawn and the win takes twenty moves longer than it should have.

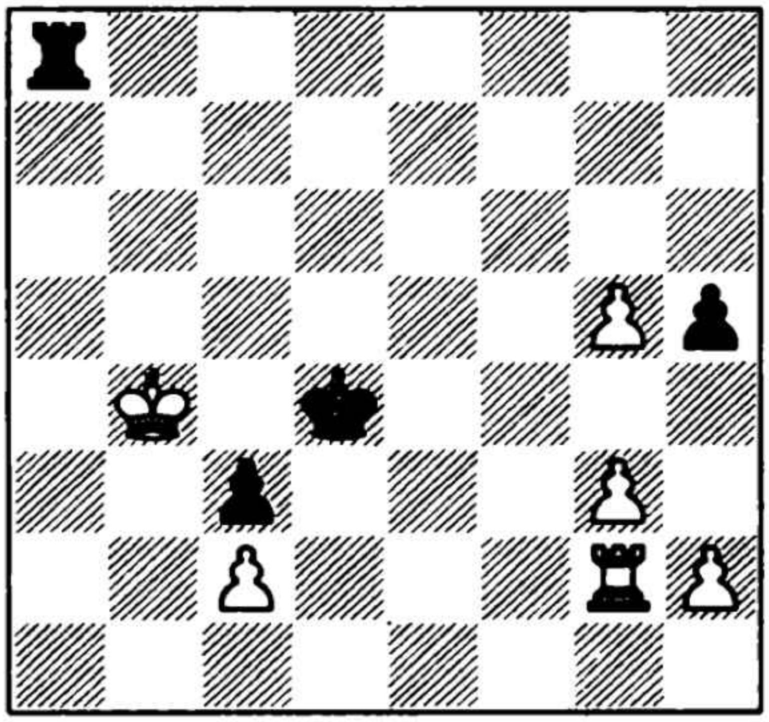
45 **fxg5** **♔e3**
46 **♖g2**

If the rook leaves the second rank, then ...♔d2.

46 **...** **♔d4** *(D)*

On 46...♖c8, 47 h4 ♔f3 48 ♖g1 ♔f2 49 ♖d1 ♔xg3 50 ♖d4 followed by ♖c4 does the trick.

W



47 **♖e2** **♖b8+**
48 **♔a4** **♖g8**
49 **h4** **♖f8**
50 **♖e7** **♖f3**
51 **♖d7+** **♔c4**
52 **♖c7+** **♔d4**
53 **♖d7+**

Repeating moves to gain time on the clock.

53 **...** **♔c4**
54 **♖c7+** **♔d4**
55 **♔b3** **♖xg3**

57 ♖h7 ♔d4
58 ♖xh5 ♖g1
59 ♖h8 ♖b1+
60 ♔a4 ♖a1+

There is no time for 60...♖b2 because of 61 g6.

61 ♔b5 ♖b1+
62 ♔c6 ♖g1
63 ♖d8+ ♔c4
64 ♖e8

Threatening ♖e4 mate!

64 ... ♔b4
65 ♔d5 ♖d1+

After 65...♔a3, White wins by 66 ♖b8.

66 ♔e6 ♖e1+
67 ♔f7 ♖f1+
68 ♔g6 ♖f2
69 h5

Now the h-pawn becomes the dangerous candidate.

69 ... ♖xc2
70 h6 ♖h2
71 h7 c2
72 ♖c8 ♔b3
73 ♔g7 1-0

Game 34

Bertok [Yugoslavia] – **Fischer**

Stockholm 1962

Queen's Gambit Declined

Hanging pawns unhung

Classical theory expounds the danger of 'hanging pawns', but Fischer demonstrates here, in a revolutionary manner, that they are just as often an asset as a liability.

Bertok's errors seem insignificant, yet he drifts into a passive position. On the verge of exploiting Black's loose centre, he always lacks just the one tempo needed to do so. Meanwhile, using the open b-file as a base of operations, Fischer manages to force White into a defensive posture. In the midst of this queenside tension, the winning move (21...g5) comes unexpectedly on the opposite wing.

1 d4 d5
2 c4 e6
3 ♘c3 ♗e7

A refinement often attributed to Petrosian, but actually played by Charousek in the 1890s and probably dating back even farther.

4 ♘f3

White, having no other good waiting move, is obliged to develop, thus restricting his option of playing this knight to e2.

4 cxd5 exd5 5 ♗f4 c6 6 e3 ♗f5 7 g4 (Byrne's 7 ♘ge2! is best) 7...♗e6 (7...♗g6! is better) 8 h3 was played frequently in the 1963 title match between Botvinnik and Petrosian. White is slightly better.

4 ... ♘f6

5 ♗g5

Back to the main line. The shadow boxing is over.

5 ... 0-0

6 e3 h6

Petrosian usually omits this move (see note to Black's 8th).

7 ♗h4 b6

Tartakower's Defence.

8 cxd5

The best procedure, opening the c-file and preparing ♖c1 with pressure on Black's c-pawn. An alternative is 8 ♗d3 ♗b7 9 0-0 ♘bd7 10 ♖c1 c5 11 ♕e2 dxc4 12 ♗xc4 ♘e4 = Petrosian-Fischer, Belgrade/Bled/Zagreb Ct 1959.

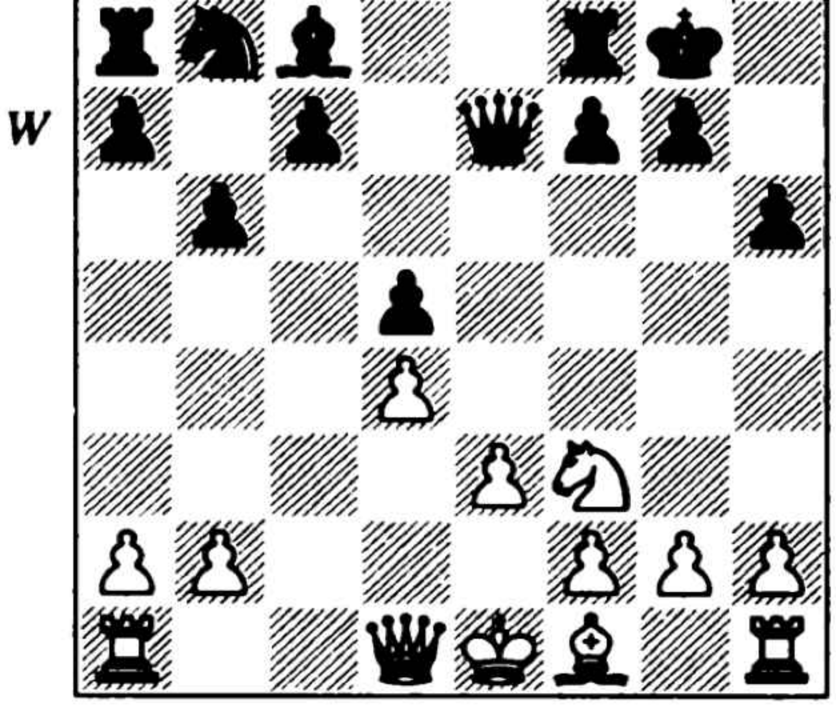
8 ... ♘xd5

Inferior here is 8...exd5 9 ♗d3 ♗b7 10 ♘e5! followed by f4 with a Pillsbury attacking formation: White has g4-g5 in the air—this line is playable for Black only with his pawn on h7 (instead of h6).

9 ♗xe7 ♕xe7

10 ♘xd5 exd5 *(D)*

This variation is drawish, but I had already clinched first prize.



Sharper is 11 ♖c1 ♗e6! 12 ♕a4 c5 13 ♕a3 ♖c8 14 ♗e2 and now 14...♔f8 equalises, while 14...♕b7! is a way of maintaining tension. Then 15 dxc5 bxc5 16 0-0 (16 ♖xc5? ♖xc5 17 ♕xc5 ♕xb2 is bad for White) 16...♕b6 is double-edged.

11 ... ♗e6!

The right post. At b7 this bishop would block the b-file and obstruct later operations there.

12 0-0 c5

13 dxc5?

Producing hanging centre pawns which here exert a tremendously cramping influence on White's future development. Better is 13 ♘e5 ♘d7 (not 13...c4? 14 b3 b5 15 a4) with equality.

13 ... bxc5

14 ♕a4 ♕b7!

15 ♕a3 ♘d7

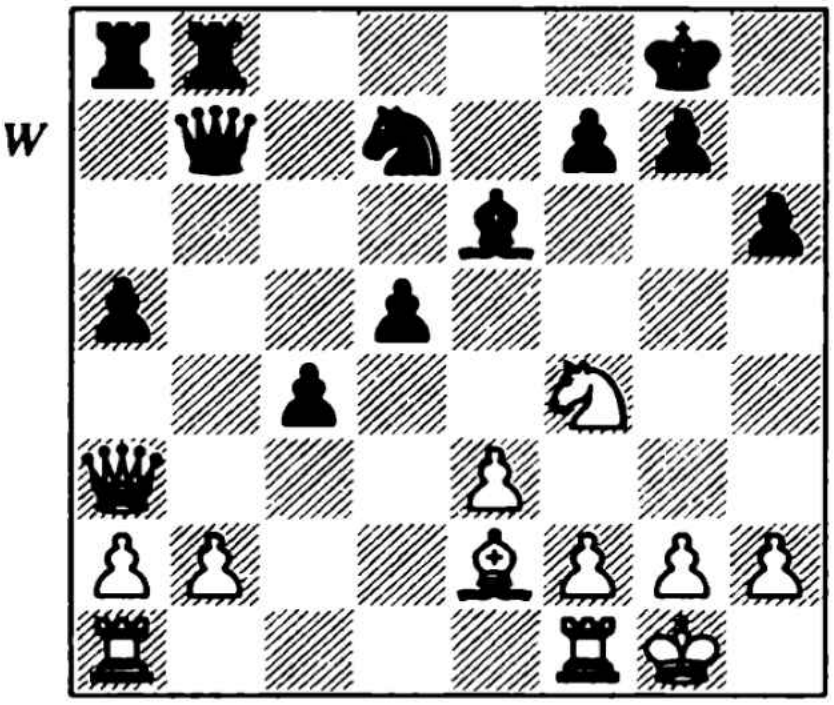
16 ♘e1

What else is there? Black's centre is well protected, and he is ready to assume the queenside initiative with

16 ... a5

17 ♘d3 c4

18 ♘f4 ♖fb8 *(D)*



19 ♖ab1?

White's game is already difficult, e.g. 19 ♗f3 ♘f6 20 ♖fd1 ♕xb2 21 ♕xb2 ♖xb2 22 ♘xd5 ♘xd5 23 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 24 ♖xd5 c3! 25 ♖dd1 (25 ♖c5 c2 26 ♖c1 ♖d8 wins for Black) 25...c2 26 ♖dc1 ♖ab8 27 ♔f1 ♖b1 28 ♔e2 ♖xa1 29 ♖xa1 ♖b1 wins.

Best is 19 ♘xe6 fxe6 20 ♗g4 ♖a6! 21 b3! (21 ♕e7? ♘f8 or 21 ♖ab1 ♕b4 22 ♕c3 ♕xc3 23 bxc3 ♖ab6) 21...cxb3 22 axb3 ♕xb3 23 ♕e7 ♘f8 24 ♖a3 with good drawing chances, e.g. 24...♕b4 25 ♕xb4 ♖xb4 26 ♗e2 ♖a7 27 ♖fa1 a4 28 ♗d1, etc.

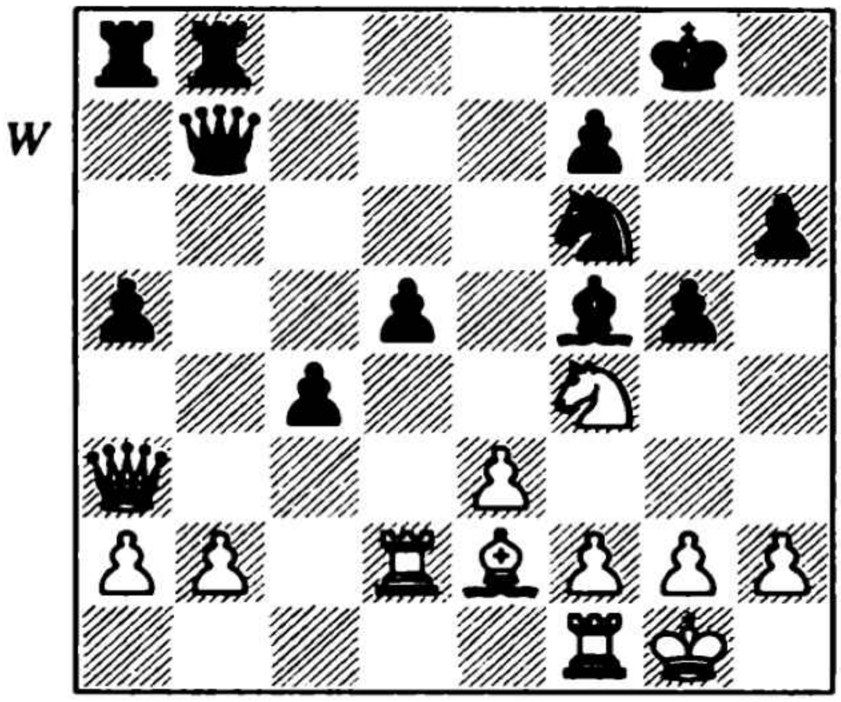
19 ... ♗f5!

20 ♖bd1 ♘f6

21 ♖d2

The following variation gives some insight into the nature of White's problems: 21 ♗f3 ♕xb2 22 ♕xb2 ♖xb2 23 ♘xd5 ♘xd5 24 ♗xd5 (24 ♖xd5 ♗e6 25 ♖c5 ♖c8! 26 ♖xa5 c3 27 ♖c1 c2 28 ♗e4 ♖b1! 29 ♖xb1 cxb1♕+ 30 ♗xb1 ♖c1 mate) 24...♖c8 25 e4 ♗e6! 26 ♗xe6 fxe6 27 a4 c3 28 ♖c1 c2 and White, completely tied up, must lose material.

21 ... g5! *(D)*



Practically forcing the win of a piece.

22 ♘xd5

To break the hammer-lock. 22 ♘h5 ♘e4 23 ♖c2 ♕b4 is crushing.

22 ... ♘xd5

23 ♗xc4

Not 23 ♗f3? ♗d3.

23 ... ♗e6

Black has some temporary discomfort but it's only a matter of time before he consolidates and wins with his extra piece.

24 ♖fd1

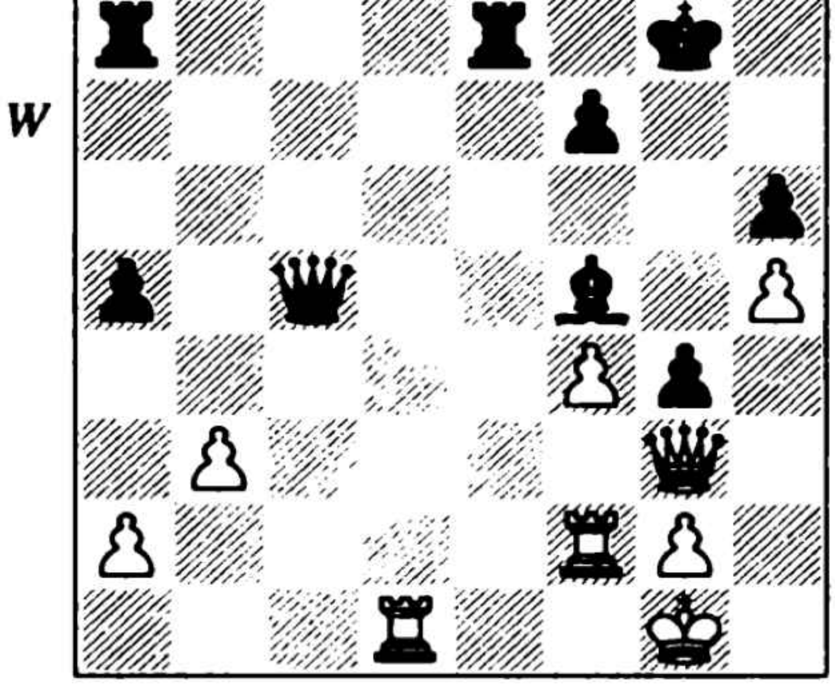
Blundering a pawn. The lesser evil is 24 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 25 f3 but White is still lost if Black exercises a modicum of caution.

24 ... ♘xe3!
25 ♕xe3 ♗xc4
26 h4 ♖e8
27 ♕g3 ♕e7
28 b3 ♗e6
29 f4 g4

Sealing the g-file and neutralising all threats.

30 h5 ♕c5+
31 ♖f2 ♗f5 *(D)*

0-1



Game 35

Fischer – Bolbochan [Argentina]

Stockholm 1962

Sicilian Defence

A brilliant cadenza

Called upon to face his favourite defence, Fischer quickly obtains the advantage against Black's rather passive opening strategy. Bolbochan, burdened with a bad bishop against a good knight, defends with extreme care but is gradually forced to retreat behind his lines. Disdaining several opportunities to enter a favourable ending, Fischer presses for a quick decision in the middlegame. His judgement is rewarded when the pressure which he painstakingly has accumulated erupts in a violent attack, beginning with 34 hxg6. Fischer's invasion on the weakened squares is a model of accuracy. It culminates in a keen combination which, appropriately, earned a tie for the first brilliancy prize.

1 e4 c5
2 ♘f3 d6
3 d4 cxd4
4 ♘xd4 ♘f6
5 ♘c3 a6
6 h3

Black's loss of time with ...a6 may possibly justify this loss of time. The variation is specifically directed against the characteristic ...e5 of the Najdorf System. Thus 6...e5 7 ♘de2 ♗e7 (or 7...♗e6 8 g4 d5 9 exd5 ♘xd5 10 ♗g2 with a comfortable edge) 8 g4 0-0 9 ♘g3! g6 10 g5 ♘e8 11 h4 gives White a powerful attack: e.g. 11...f6? 12 ♗c4+ ♔g7 13 h5 fxg5 14 hxg6 hxg6 15 ♘h5+!.

6 ... ♘c6

For 6...g6 see Game 43. For 6...b5 see Game 41.

7 g4 ♘xd4

8 ♕xd4 e5

9 ♕d3 ♗e7

More accurate is 9...♗e6 immediately.

10 g5!

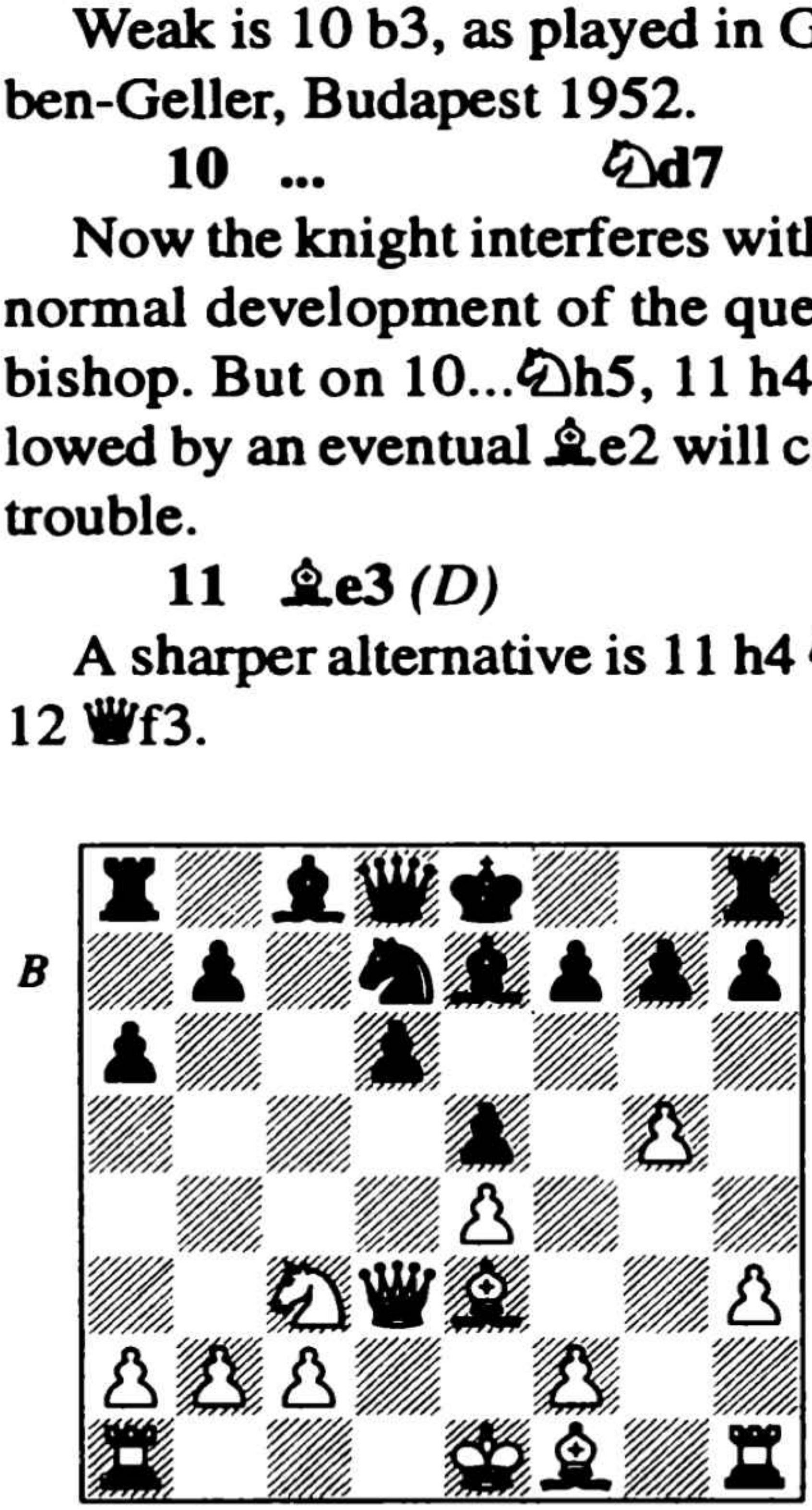
Weak is 10 b3, as played in Gereben-Geller, Budapest 1952.

10 ... ♘d7

Now the knight interferes with the normal development of the queen's bishop. But on 10...♘h5, 11 h4 followed by an eventual ♗e2 will cause trouble.

11 ♗e3 *(D)*

A sharper alternative is 11 h4 ♘c5 12 ♕f3.



11 ... ♘c5?

The best chance is 11...♗xg5 12 ♗xg5 ♕xg5 13 ♕xd6 ♕e7 14 ♕xe7+ ♔xe7 15 ♘d5+ ♔f8 16 0-0-0 g6 (Kotov) holding White to a minimal endgame edge.

12 ♕d2 ♗e6

13 0-0-0 0-0

14 f3 ♖c8

15 ♔b1

Amateurs are often puzzled by this apparent loss of time. Actually it is a handy defensive move, getting out of the pin on the c-file, which could become annoying after ...b5-b4. One never knows when lightning will strike!

15 ... ♘d7

The knight has no future on c5, so Bolbochan tries to bring it into play via b6.

16 h4 b5

17 ♗h3 ♗xh3

17...♘b6 is met by 18 ♗xb6 ♕xb6 19 ♘d5 ♕d8 (19...♗xd5? 20 ♗xc8) 20 ♘xe7+ ♕xe7 21 ♕xd6, etc.

On 17...♖e8, 18 ♘d5 ♗f8 19 h5 with a tremendous bind. Black has to reckon with the possible breakthrough on g6.

18 ♖xh3 ♘b6

19 ♗xb6 ♕xb6

20 ♘d5

White's has a strategically won game; his knight is immovable.

20 ... ♕d8

21 f4

Threatening f5. An example of some of the nonsense that has been written about my games, both by admirers and detractors, is the following (by Lublinsky) in the 1962 Russian Yearbook: "Brilliant intuition! Fischer refuses to enter into the rook and pawn endgame and plays to continue his attack." But White can't! Not 21 ♘xe7+? ♛xe7 22 ♛xd6?? ♜fd8 and Black wins.

21 ... exf4

22 ♛xf4 ♛d7

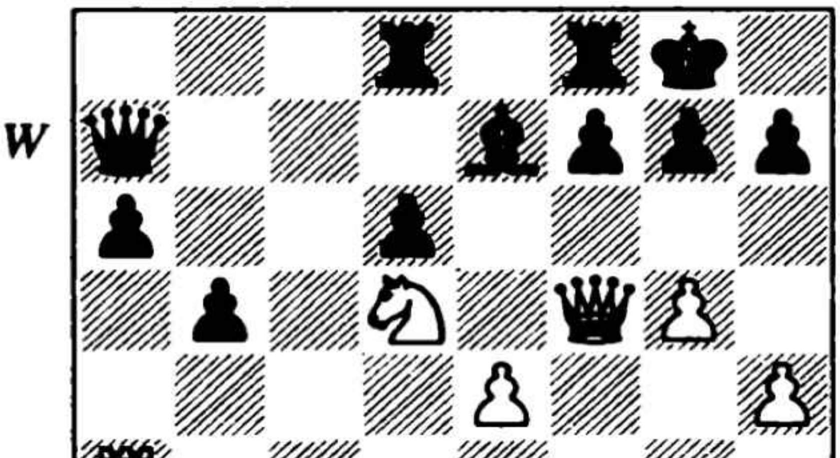
23 ♛f5 ♜cd8

Insufficient is 23...♜fd8? (also not 23...♛xf5? 24 ♘xe7+) 24 ♛xd7 ♜xd7 25 ♘b6.

24 ♜a3!

Shows how ideal the position is—White can afford the luxury of probing weaknesses on both wings.

24 ... ♛a7 *(D)*



25 ♜c3

Tempting is 25 ♘f6+!? ♗xf6 (if 25...gxf6? 26 gxf6 ♚h8 27 ♛g5 ♜g8, then 28 fxe7!) 26 gxf6 g6 27 ♛g5 ♚h8 but White has no forced win in sight.

Objectively best is 25 ♘xe7+ ♛xe7 26 ♜xa6 ♜fe8 27 a4!, but I was hoping to win in the middlegame. Ironically, I wouldn't have been awarded the brilliancy prize had I chosen the best line here. They don't give medals for endgame technique!

25 ... g6!

On 25...♛d7?, 26 ♜c7 wins. Or 25...♜d7? 26 ♘f6+! ♗xf6 (26...gxf6 27 gxf6 ♚h8 28 fxe7 wins) 27 gxf6 g6 28 ♛g5 ♚h8 29 ♛h6 ♜g8 30 ♜c8! forces mate.

26 ♛g4 ♛d7

27 ♛f3 ♛e6

Not 27...♜c8? 28 ♜xc8 ♜xc8 29 ♘b6.

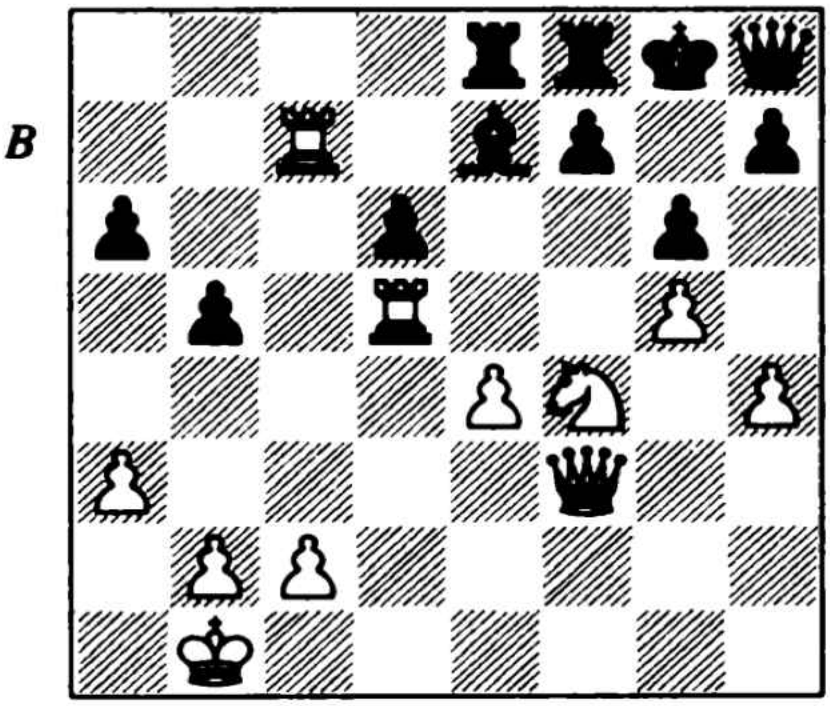
28 ♜c7 ♜de8

On 28...♜d7, 29 ♘f4 wins. And after 28...♜fe8 29 ♜f1 Black hardly has any moves. 29...♜c8 is answered by 30 ♜a7 ♜a8 31 ♜xa8 ♜xa8 32 ♘c7.

29 ♘f4 ♛e5

30 ♜d5 ♛h8

31 a3 *(D)*



31 ... h6

A bid for freedom—otherwise ♖a7 mops up the queenside pawns. On 31...f6, 32 ♕b3! ♖f7 33 ♖xd6 fxg5 34 hxg5 ♕e5 35 ♖f6! ♖f8 36 ♖xf7 ♖xf7 37 ♖c8+ ♗f8 38 ♘e6 wins.

32 gxh6 ♕xh6

On 32...♗xh4?, 33 ♘xg6! fxg6 34 ♕b3 is decisive (34...♖f7 35 ♖f5).

33 h5 ♗g5

After 33...g5, 34 ♘e2 followed by ♘d4 (or g3-f5) maintains a winning bind. Black also has to contend with the threat of ♖a7.

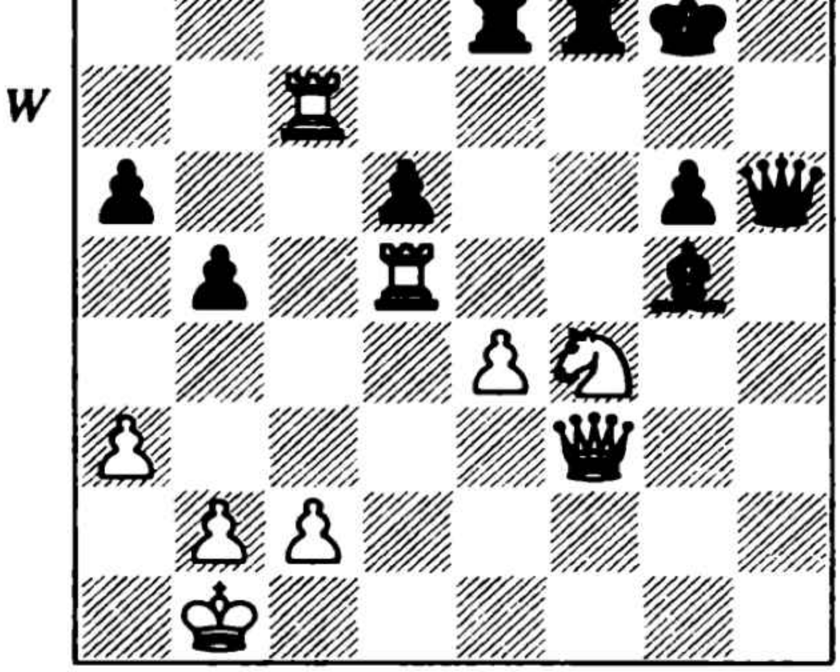
34 hxg6! fxg6 *(D)*

On 34...♗xf4, 35 gxf7+ ♖xf7 36 ♖xf7 ♔xf7 37 ♖h5! wins.

35 ♕b3!

The *coup de grâce.*

35 ... ♖xf4



On 35...♔h8 (or 35...♗xf4 36 ♖h5+), 36 ♘xg6+ ♕xg6 37 ♖xg5 ♖f1+ (37...♕xg5 38 ♕h3+ forces mate) 38 ♔a2 ♕xg5 39 ♕h3+ ♔g8 40 ♕h7+ ♔f8 41 ♕h8+ ♕g8 42 ♕h6+ ♕g7 43 ♕xg7 mate.

36 ♖e5+ ♔f8

37 ♖xe8+ 1-0

After 37...♔xe8, 38 ♕e6+ ♔f8 39 ♕c8+ mates.

Game 36

Fischer – Korchnoi [USSR]

Stockholm 1962

Ruy Lopez

Gaston and Alphonse

"I like to coax my opponents into attacking, to let them taste the joy of the initiative, so that they may get carried away, become careless, and sacrifice material," wrote Korchnoi, whose comments are interwoven in the notes.

Fischer needs no coaxing. He improves on a well-known Capablanca line (with 15 d5). Still, the advantage he derives, if any, is microscopic. Korchnoi seems to labour under the delusion that he has the worse of it, though Fischer keeps asserting that White has nothing. Nevertheless, he overreaches himself, giving Korchnoi a chance to assume the initiative. But Black falters and then cracks under the pressure of the clock.

1 e4 e5
2 ♘f3 ♘c6
3 ♗b5 a6
4 ♗a4 ♘f6
5 0-0 ♗e7
6 ♖e1 b5
7 ♗b3 0-0
8 c3 d6
9 d4

An old try, championed by Yates and Alekhine, but discarded in the course of progress. It is still theoretically crucial—on its success (or failure) hinges the necessity of White's losing a tempo here with the customary 9 h3.

9 ... ♗g4
10 ♗e3 exd4

Gligorić's 10...d5 is probably best. On the old 10...♘xe4!? 11 ♗d5 ♕d7 12 ♗xe4 d5 13 ♗xh7+! ♔xh7 14 dxe5 White, according to Robert Byrne, can keep his extra pawn and weather the attack.

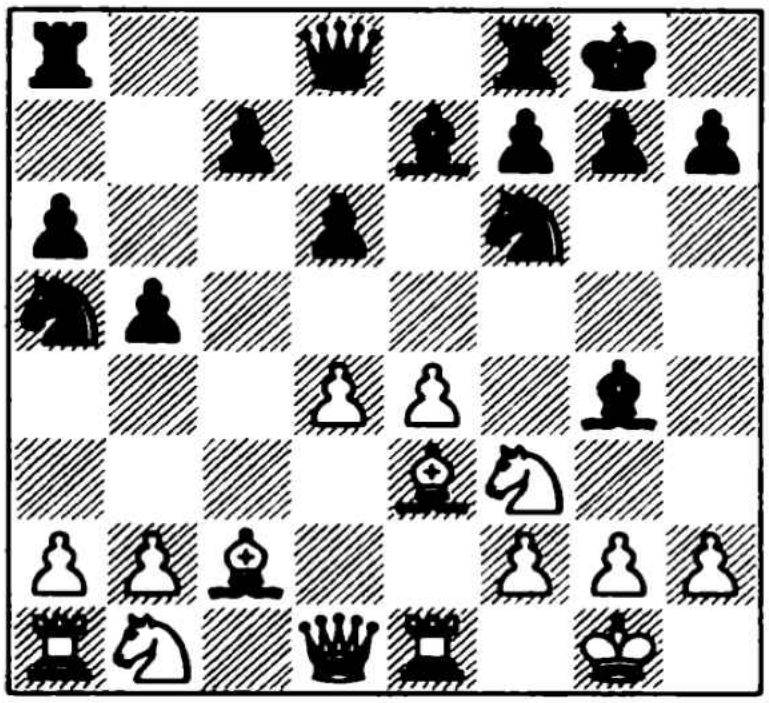
11 cxd4 ♘a5

11...d5 12 e5 ♘e4 13 ♘bd2 ♘xd2 14 ♕xd2 ♗xf3 15 gxf3 ♗b4 16 ♕c2 ♗xe1 17 ♕xc6 ♗b4 18 ♗xd5 is known to favour White.

12 ♗c2 *(D)*

12 ... ♘c4

12...c5 may be better: 13 ♘bd2 cxd4 14 ♗xd4 ♘c6 15 ♗e3 d5 16 exd5 ♘b4 = Yates-Bogoljubow, New York 1924. Hence 13 dxc5 dxc5 14 ♘bd2 seems the only try for an advantage.



13 ♗c1 c5
14 b3

Interesting is 14 ♘bd2 ♘xd2 15 ♕xd2 ♗xf3 16 gxf3; Geller-Panno, Amsterdam 1956.

14 ... ♘a5

Korchnoi is of a mind that the retreat 14...♘b6 completely equalises. But White can keep a pull after 15 ♘bd2 cxd4 (maybe better is 15...♘fd7 16 h3 ♗h5 17 g4 ♗g6 18 d5 ♗f6 19 ♖b1 h5! Pietzsch-Szabo, 1962) 16 h3 ♗h5 17 g4! ♗g6 18 ♘xd4 (Pietzsch-Matanović, Havana 1962).

15 d5!

"A strong continuation, which improves on 15 ♗b2 ♘c6! 16 d5 ♘b4 (Capablanca-Bogoljubow, London 1922) when Black gains the advantage of the pair of bishops." (Korchnoi.)

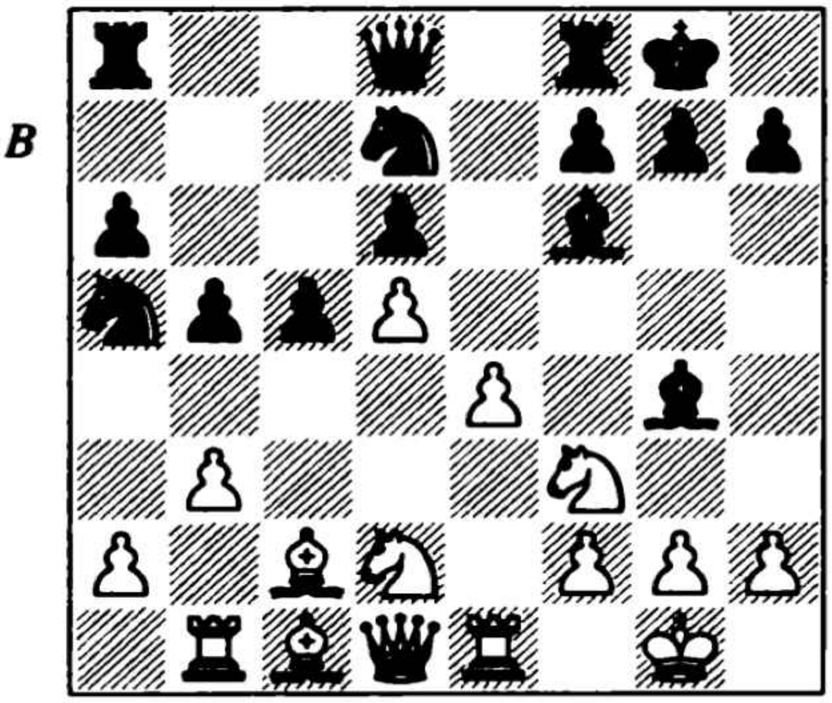
15 ... ♘d7

After 15...♘xe4 16 ♖xe4 ♗xf3 17 ♕xf3 ♗f6 18 ♘c3 b4 19 ♗b2 bxc3 20 ♗xc3 ♗xc3 21 ♕xc3 White has a big advantage.

16 ♘bd2 ♗f6

Aiming to strike on the dark squares before White can generate a kingside initiative.

17 ♖b1 *(D)*



17 ... c4

Korchnoi considers this over-ambitious, believing that it creates too many pawn weaknesses. He thinks Black ought to play 17...♘e5 18 h3 ♘xf3+ 19 ♘xf3 ♗xf3 20 ♕xf3 b4 but then 21 ♗f4 ♖e8 (too passive is 21...♘b7 22 ♗d3, etc.) 22 ♕g3 ♗e5 23 ♗xe5 ♖xe5 (if 23...dxe5, 24 ♗d3) 24 f4 ♖e7 25 ♖bd1 (threatening e5) maintains the pressure.

18 h3

"White does not fall for 18 b4? c3! 19 bxa5 cxd2 20 ♗xd2 ♘e5 when the ensuing break-up of the pawn protection of White's king more than compensates for his extra doubled pawn." (Korchnoi.)

18 ... ♗xf3

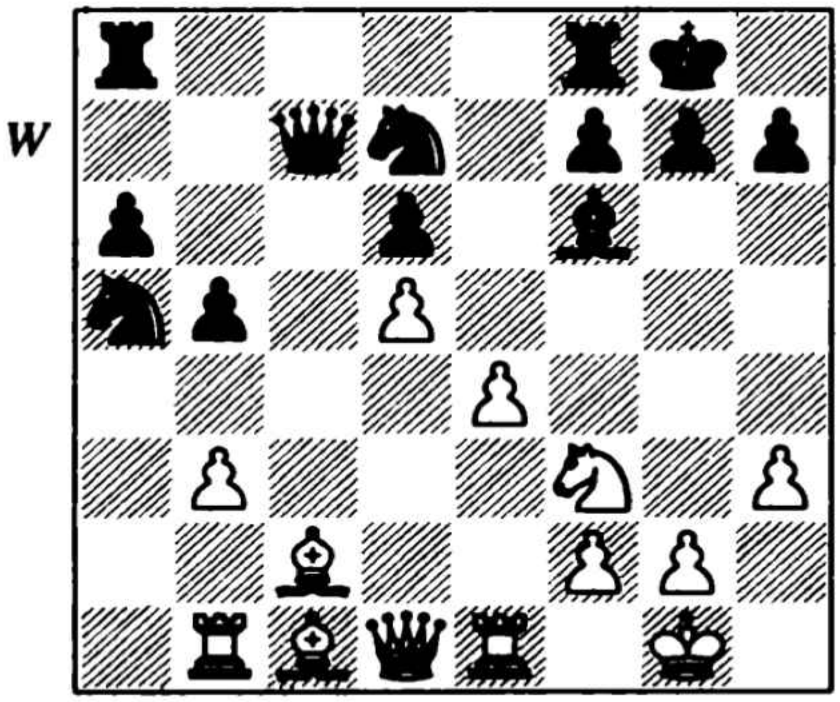
"Giving White the two bishops, but after 18...♗h5, 19 b4! is now strong: 19...c3 20 bxa5 cxd2 21 ♗xd2 ♘e5 22 g4." (Korchnoi.)

In this line simply 19...♘b7 followed by ...a5 yields good counterplay. On 18...♗h5 I intended 19 g4! (deadening Black's bishop is worth this weakness) 19...♗g6 20 ♘f1 followed by ♘g3, etc.

19 ♘xf3 cxb3

On 19...♖e8, 20 b4 ♘b7 21 ♘d4 is strong. And 19...c3? 20 a3! leaves the c-pawn artificially isolated: White can encircle it by ♗e3-d4, ♖e3, etc. Black's knight on a5 is stranded; should it retreat to b7, then b4 smothers its future.

20 axb3 ♕c7 *(D)*



21 ♗e3

"Up to here, White has played in excellent style, but this inaccurate move considerably improves

Black's position. White ought to play 21 ♗d2 or, still better, 21 ♖e2! protecting the king's bishop and preparing the powerful manoeuvre ♘d4." (Korchnoi).

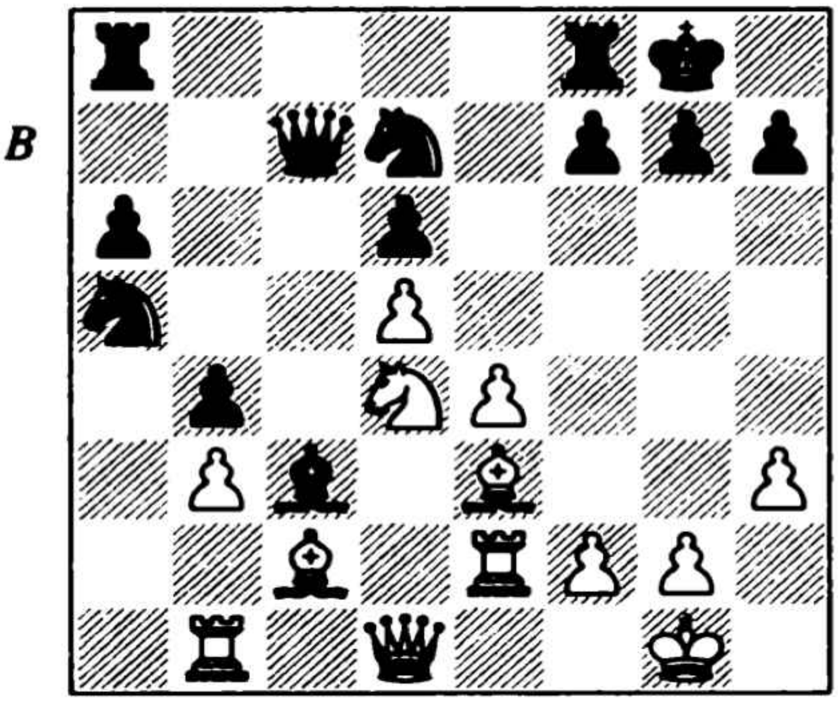
The truth is, White just doesn't have that much. After either 21 ♗d2 or 21 ♖e2 Black can still reply with 21...♗c3.

21 ... ♗c3!

22 ♖e2 b4

"Now Black has sufficient play on the dark squares." (Korchnoi).

23 ♘d4 *(D)*



23 ... ♖fe8

"Worried by his loose pawn front and his scattered minor pieces, Black decides that he ought to get another piece into play rather than spend a move protecting his kingside. However, Fischer soon demonstrates that the white knight obtains splendid prospects on the kingside; hence 23...g6 is much better." (Korchnoi).

On 23...g6 24 ♗d3 ♘c5 25 ♖c2 ♘ab7 26 ♘e2 ♗g7 the bishop dances away and White has achieved nothing.

24 ♘f5 ♘b7

25 ♗d4 g6

The threat was ♘xg7.

26 ♘h6+ ♔f8

27 ♖c1!

"This powerful move is a reminder to Black that he has problems on the c-file as well as in the neighbourhood of his king." (Korchnoi).

27 ... ♖ac8

"In the event of White's exchanging bishops, Black wants to be ready to recapture with a piece (queen or rook) rather than be left with a pawn on c3 which will most likely be fatally weak." (Korchnoi).

Not 27...♗xd4 28 ♕xd4 f6 29 ♕xb4.

28 ♗d3

"This inaccuracy grants Black a fresh chance of recovery. A very strong continuation here was 28 ♖e3! with the threat of 29 ♗xc3 bxc3 30 ♕d4! f6 31 ♗b1, when the c-pawn would fall." (Korchnoi).

28 ... ♕a5

On 28...♕d8, 29 ♖ec2 maintains the pin.

29 ♖ec2 ♘e5

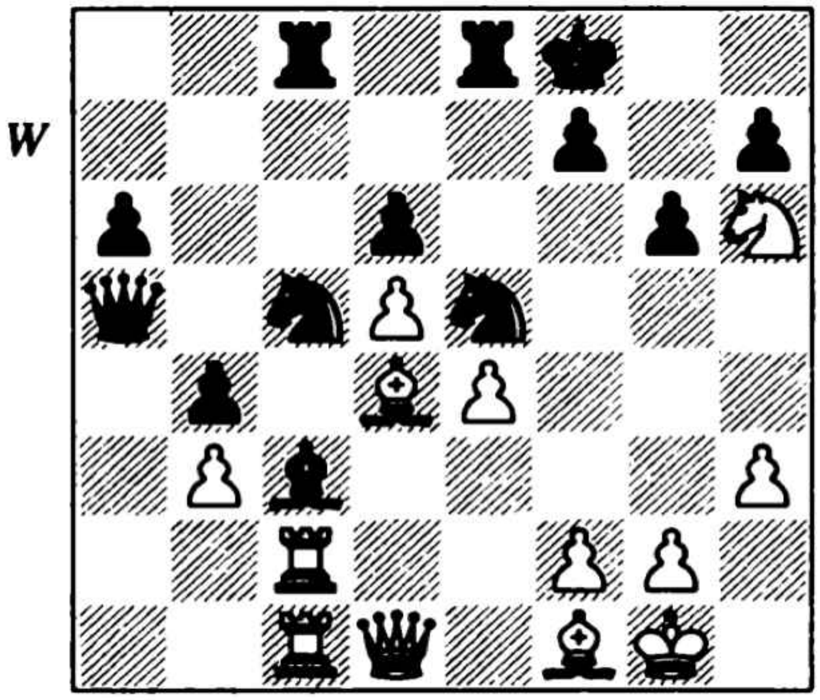
30 ♗f1 ♘c5 *(D)*

"Sacrificing a pawn for the moment, but the black pieces obtain excellent activity." (Korchnoi).

31 ♗xc3 bxc3

32 ♖xc3 ♔g7

33 ♘g4 ♘xg4



34 ♕xg4 ♖b8

Breaking the pin and threatening the e-pawn and/or the b-pawn. Not 34...♖xe4?? 35 ♕xc8.

35 ♖f3

"White's best chance is to revive his attack on the kingside." (Korchnoi).

35 ... ♘xe4

36 ♕f4 f5

"36...♖b7 may be safer here." (Korchnoi).

The text weakens the kingside, but White can't exploit it.

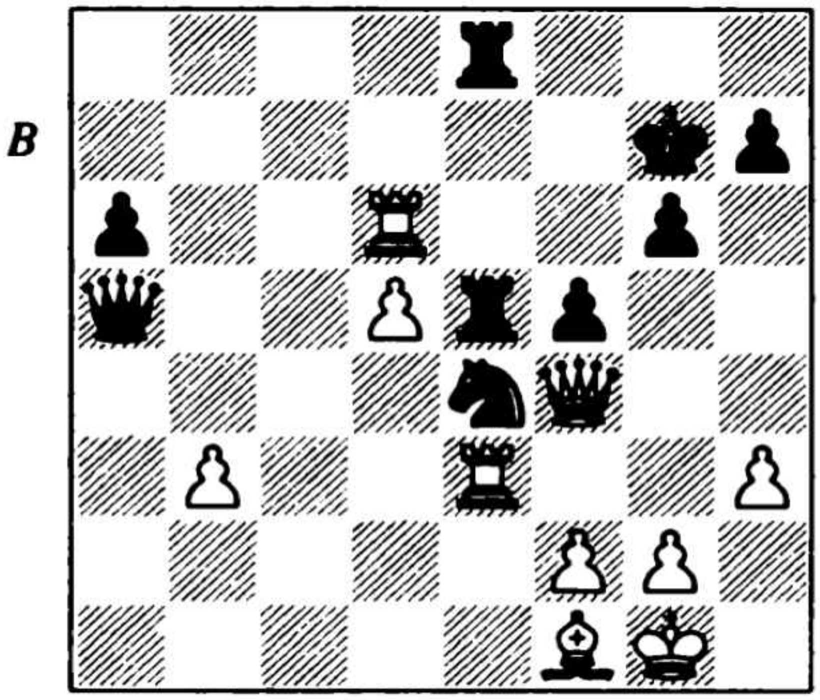
37 ♖e3 ♖e5

38 ♖c6 ♖be8!?

"Short of time, I overlooked White's next move completely. Even so, the text is not bad, but for practical purposes Black ought to choose the simple 38...g5 maintaining a good position without risk." (Korchnoi).

After 38...g5 39 ♕f3 ♖be8 40 ♖xa6 ♕xd5 41 b4 the chances are approximately equal.

39 ♖xd6! *(D)*



39 ... ♕a1?

"A bad error, after which Black is two pawns behind with no compensation. Correct and necessary is 39...g5! 40 ♖d7+ ♔g6 41 ♕f3 ♕b6! with the threat 42...♘xf2!. For instance:

"a) 42 ♗d3? allows 42...♘xf2 43 ♖xe5 ♘xd3+.

"b) 42 g4? ♘xf2 43 ♖xe5 ♘xg4+.

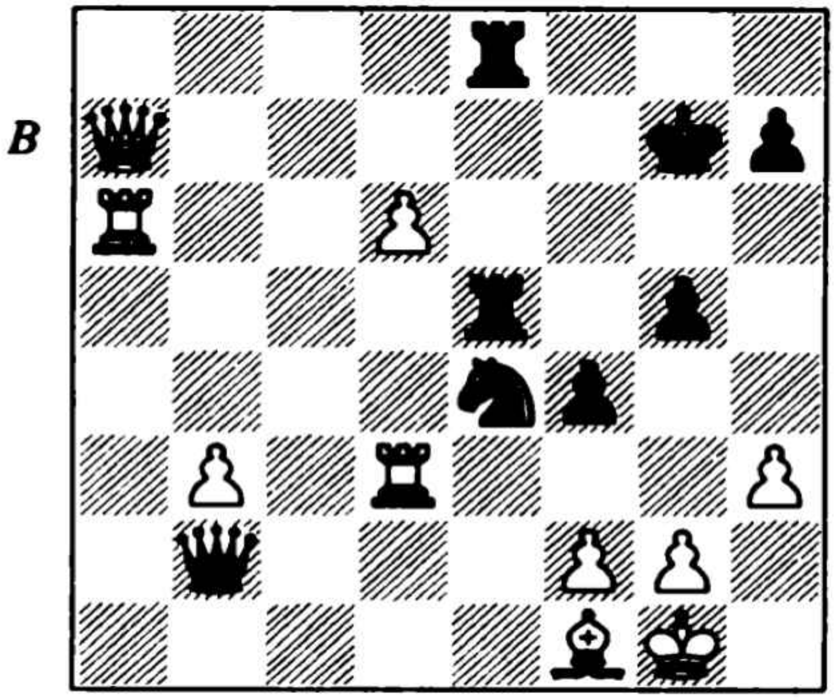
"c) 42 ♖xe4! (best) 42...♖xe4 43 g4 ♖f4 44 gxf5+ ♔h6 45 ♕g3 ♖e5 with at least a draw.

"Instead, Black panics at the unexpected turn of events, and Fischer efficiently finishes the game in a few moves." (Korchnoi).

Incidentally, Korchnoi neglects to add that after 41...♕b6! Black has the additional threat of ...♘f6 (as well as ...♘xf2) trapping the rook. He also neglects to analyse the right defence: 42 ♕e2! ♘xf2 (What else? If 42...f4, 43 ♖xe4 ♖xe4 44 ♕c2 ♔h6 45 ♖c7! wins) 43 ♖xe5! ♘e4+ (it's fascinating that Black has no better discovery; if 43...♘g4+ 44

♖e3! ♖xe3 45 ♕xa6 ♕xa6 46 ♗xa6 ♘f6! 47 ♖d8 ♖xb3 =, whilst Black must avoid 43...♘xh3++? 44 ♔h2 ♕g1+ 45 ♔g3! f4+ 46 ♔f3! ♖xe5 47 ♕xa6+!, winning for White) 44 ♔h2 ♖xe5 45 ♕xa6 ♕xa6 46 ♗xa6 ♘f6 regaining the d-pawn with a likely draw in view.

40 ♖xa6 ♕d4
41 ♖d3 ♕b2
42 d6 g5
43 ♕e3 f4
44 ♕a7+ *(D)* **1-0**



Black must lose a rook after 44...♔f8 45 d7 ♖d8 46 ♕b6 ♔e7 47 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8 48 ♖a8+ followed by d8♕+.

Game 37

Keres [USSR] – **Fischer**

Curaçao Ct 1962

Sicilian Defence

Only a draw

This contest brings to mind Emanuel Lasker's axiom:

"When evenly matched opponents play 'correctly', the games seldom have any content and frequently end in draws." Here a little incorrect play provokes a series of brilliant moves leading to a most unusual draw.

Employing a slow, closed system against the Sicilian, Keres is strategically outplayed. By adjournment, however, he manages to achieve equality. Fischer refuses a draw, and the struggle flares anew. Working with a rook against two minor pieces, he makes steady inroads. Each serpentine twist in the endgame, including the double error on move 56, is a joy, a revelation, and a study in itself. Keres' saving resources smack of sheer wizardry.

1 e4 c5
2 ♘e2 d6
3 g3 g6

Sharper is 3...d5! 4 ♗g2 dxe4 5 ♗xe4 (on Lombardy's 5 ♘bc3, 5...♘f6 equalises—but not 5...f5 6 d3 exd3 7 cxd3 ♘f6 8 0-0 and White's attack is worth more than a pawn) 5...♘f6 6 ♗g2 ♘c6 7 0-0 e6 with equality.

4 ♗g2 ♗g7

5 0-0

Harmless. Correct is 5 c3 ♘c6 6 d4 with a powerful centre. If Black goes pawn hunting now he gets shattered: 6...cxd4 7 cxd4 ♕b6? 8 ♘bc3 ♘xd4? 9 ♘d5 ♕c5 10 ♘xd4 ♗xd4 11 ♗e3! ♗xe3 12 fxe3 ♕a5+ 13 b4 ♕d8 14 ♖c1 ♖b8 15 0-0 ♗d7 16 ♕d4 f6 17 ♘c7+ ♔f7 18 e5! with a strong attack; Samarian-Wesen, corres. 1958. The sober 6...e5 7 dxc5 dxc5 8 ♕xd8+ ♘xd8 9 ♘a3 is more solid and allows White only a slightly better ending.

5 ... ♘c6

6 c3 e5!

7 d3

Now White has to regroup in order to get in d4.

7 ... ♘ge7

8 a3

A lemon, but already White must fight for equality. On 8 ♗e3 0-0 9 d4 exd4 10 cxd4 cxd4 (also good is 10...d5 11 ♘bc3 ♗g4!) 11 ♘xd4 ♘e5 Black captures the initiative; Pachman-Tal, Amsterdam 1964.

8 ... 0-0

Deciding to ignore the queenside. Keres hoped for 8...a5 9 a4! and White has tricked Black into weakening the b5 square.

9 b4

Probably played against Keres' better judgement, but I guess he wanted to justify his last move. One lemon leads to another.

9 ... b6

10 f4 exf4!

Abandoning the centre to play against White's shaky pawn structure.

11 gxf4

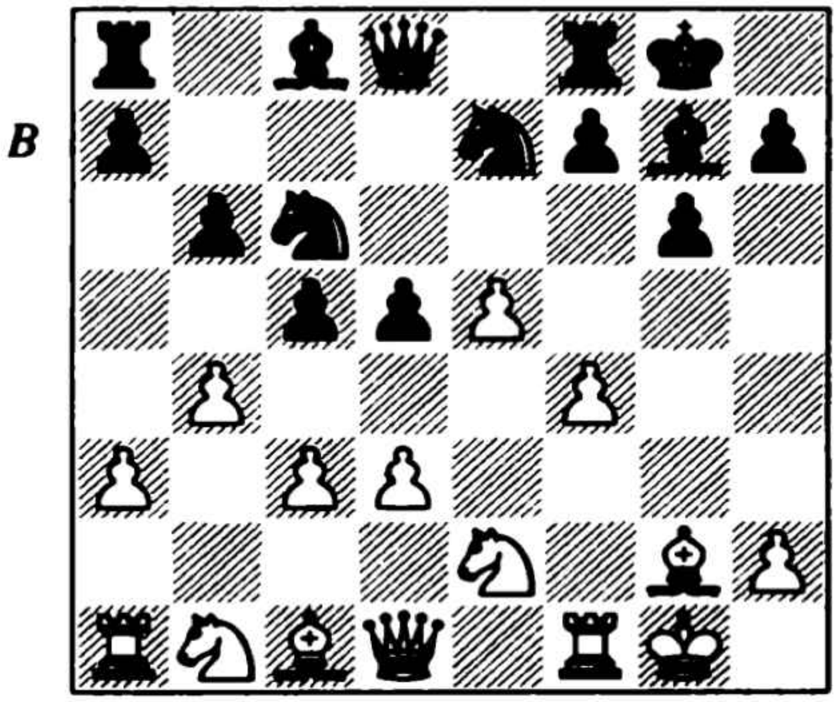
Not 11 ♘xf4? (if 11 ♗xf4, then 11...d5) 11...cxb4 12 axb4 ♘xb4!.

11 ... d5!

It is wrong to play 11...cxb4 12 axb4 ♘xb4? in view of 13 f5! ♘ec6 14 d4 ♘a6 15 e5, etc.

12 e5 *(D)*

Poker-faced, as always, Keres made this move as though it were the most natural one on the board. But it was the last thing he wanted to do, since it exposes the poverty of White's strategy.



12 ... ♗g4

Not bad, but 12...♘f5 *à la* Nimzowitsch is even better. After 13

♘g3 ♘ce7 Black maintains a solid blockade, and can break with ...f6 at his leisure.

13 h3 ♗xe2

Even stronger is 13...♗e6 14 ♘g3 ♕d7 15 ♔h2 f6. The absence of Black's queen's bishop makes it difficult to exploit White's light-square weaknesses.

14 ♕xe2 f6

15 b5

The only way to keep the centre from crumbling. After 15 e6 f5 the advanced e-pawn becomes a target.

15 ... ♘a5

16 ♘d2

Better is 16 ♖a2. If then 16...fxe5 17 fxe5 ♖xf1+ 18 ♕xf1 ♗xe5, 19 ♗g5! is strong.

16 ... fxe5

17 fxe5 ♖xf1+

18 ♘xf1

Any recapture proves to be awkward. Also 18 ♗xf1 ♕c7! 19 ♘f3 (not 19 d4 cxd4 20 cxd4 ♕c3) 19...♘b3 is similar to the game.

18 ... ♘b3

19 ♖b1 ♘xc1

20 ♖xc1 ♕c7!

21 ♖e1

Still impossible is 21 d4? cxd4 and White can't recapture because of the pin. Despite the drawing tendency of the opposite-coloured bishops, White has a difficult game: he's weak on all the squares and his king is somewhat exposed.

22 ♘h2

Black gets an iron grip after 22 d4 cxd4 23 cxd4 ♘f5 followed by ...♗h6, etc.

22 ... d4

23 cxd4 cxd4

24 ♘f3?

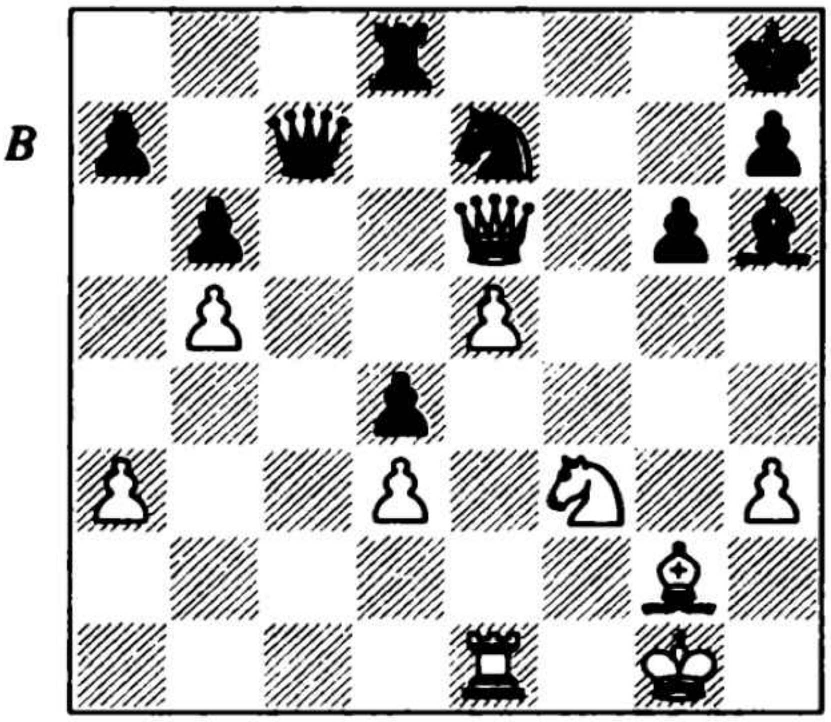
A terrible boner, just when White could equalise with 24 ♘g4! ♖f8 25 ♖f1.

24 ... ♗h6!

Keres probably underestimated the strength of this reply.

25 ♕a2+ ♔h8

26 ♕e6 *(D)*



26 ... ♘d5?

Tempting but wrong. Correct is 26...♘f5! 27 ♕f6+ (if 27 ♘h2? ♗e3+ wins) 27...♗g7 28 ♕e6 ♖f8 followed by ...♗h6 again, and it's just a matter of time before Black invades on the weak dark squares. For example, 29 ♘g5 (not 29 ♘h2 ♕c3!) 29...♗h6 30 ♘e4 ♗e3+ 31 ♔h1 ♗f4 32 ♘f6 ♕c3 33 ♖d1 ♕c2, The saving clause. Not 27 ♘xd4? ♕c5.

27 ... ♘e3

After 27...♘f4? 28 ♕f6+ ♔g8 29 ♘g4 White wins!

28 ♗c6!

Now the queen is hemmed in and Black has nothing. The knight on e3 must co-ordinate with the heavy artillery to be really meaningful.

28 ... ♖f8

29 ♘f3 ♗f4

On 29...♕d8, 30 ♕d6 holds. The chances are now even.

30 ♘xd4 ♗xe5

31 ♘f3 ♗d4!

32 ♖xe3

Not 32 ♘xd4?? ♕g3+.

32 ... ♗xe3+

On 32...♕f4, 33 ♔f2! holds.

33 ♕xe3 ♕g3+

34 ♔f1 ♕xh3+

35 ♔e1 ♕f5

36 d4 ♔g7

36...h5? 37 ♕h6+ ♔g8 38 ♗d5+ ♕xd5 39 ♕xg6+ draws.

37 ♔f2!

The right plan—the king must stay on the kingside to blockade Black's pawns. Eventually Black, to make progress, must advance; but in so doing he will expose his king to a perpetual check.

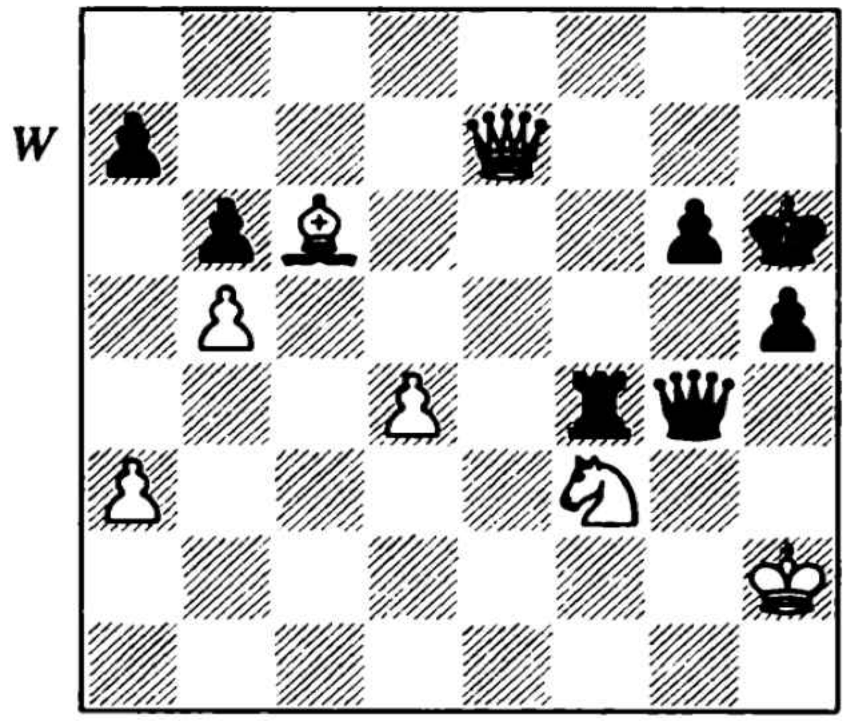
Wrong is 37 ♕e5+ ♕xe5+ 38 dxe5 ♖f4 (intending ...♖a4). White's e-pawn can always be stopped by the king.

38 ♔g3 ♕g4+

39 ♔h2 ♖f4

On 39...♕f4+, 40 ♕xf4 ♖xf4 41 ♔g3 holds. And not 39...h4? 40 ♕e7+ ♖f7 41 ♕xf7+!.

40 ♕e7+ ♔h6 *(D)*



The game was adjourned and Keres sealed his move. Upon resuming the next day, he offered me a draw, which I rejected. I knew Black no longer had a winning advantage, but felt no harm could come from continuing since there was little danger of losing. Besides, winning this game would still have put me in contention for first place even as late as round 14, the halfway mark.

41 ♕e2 ♕f5

42 ♕e3 g5

43 ♔g2 ♖g4+

44 ♔f2 ♖f4

45 ♔g2 ♕c2+

Beginning a series of exploratory checks to see if White goes to the wrong square. For instance, 46 ♔g3?

♖g4+ 47 ♔h3 ♕g2 mate. Hope springs eternal!

46 ♔h1 ♕b1+
47 ♔h2 ♕a2+
48 ♔h3 ♕f7
49 ♔h2 ♕f6
50 ♔g2 ♔g7

Getting out of the potential pin. Not 50...g4? 51 ♔g3. Black must strive to advance the pawns so that they retain maximum mobility.

51 ♔g3 h4+
52 ♔g2

52 ♔h2? loses to 52...g4.

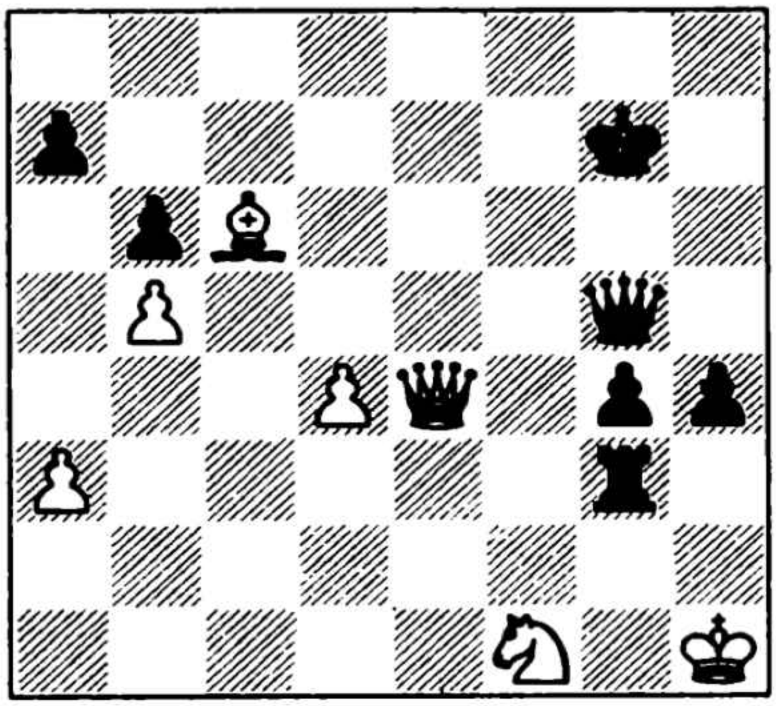
52 ... ♖g4+

52...g4 is refuted by 53 ♘xh4!.

53 ♔h1 ♖g3
54 ♕e4 g4
55 ♘h2 ♕g5
56 ♘f1? *(D)*

A blunder on the last move of the second time-control. Perhaps Keres has allowed me to get a little too much out of the position, but he can still hold a draw with 56 ♕e5+! ♕xe5 57 dxe5 (threatening ♗d7) 57...♖xa3 58 ♘xg4, etc.

B



56 ... ♖h3+?

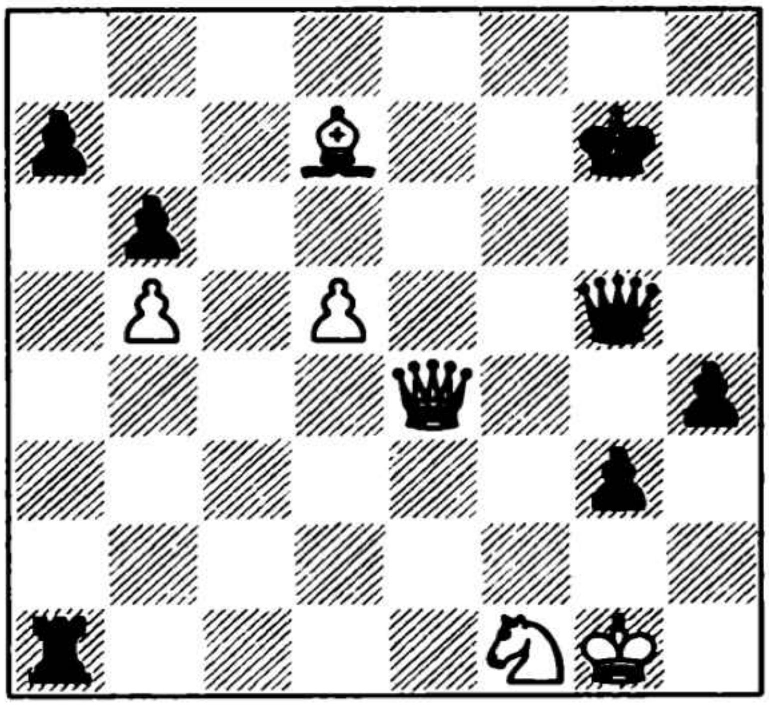
I had a feeling this might be a mistake, but time was short and I had to make a move any move. 'Patzer sees a check, gives a check.' But now the game can no longer be won.

Correct is 56...♖xa3! 57 d5 g3 58 d6 (if 58 ♗d7 ♖a1 59 ♔g2 ♖a2+ 60 ♔g1 ♕f6 61 ♗f5 ♖f2) 58...♖a1 59 ♕e7+ (if 59 ♔g1, then 59...♕c5+ wins) 59...♕xe7 60 dxe7 h3! 61 e8♘+ ♔f8, winning.

57 ♔g1 ♖xa3
58 d5 g3
59 ♗d7! ♖a1 *(D)*

No longer gains a tempo, as in the last note.

W



60 ♗f5!

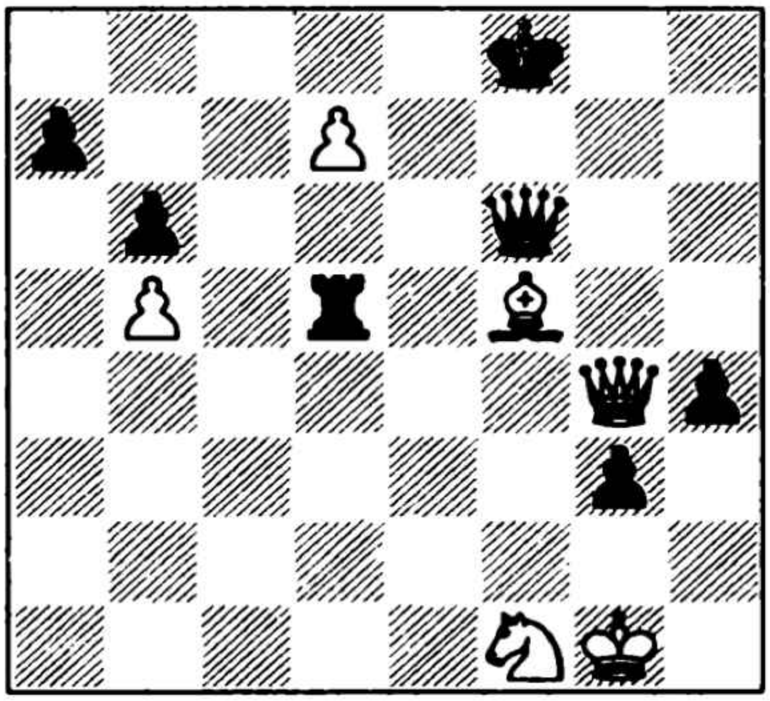
The idea is to advance the pawn to d6 without allowing ...♕c5+. I must confess that I still expected to win. But now Keres really starts to find moves!

60 ... ♕f6
61 ♕f4 ♖e1
62 d6 ♖e5

63 ♕g4+!

Not 63 d7? ♖xf5 64 ♕xf5 ♕xf5 65 d8♕ ♕f2+ and mate next move

63 ... ♔f8
64 d7 ♖d5 *(D)*



Now 64...♖xf5 65 d8♕+! ♕xd8 66 ♕xf5+ draws.

65 ♔g2! ♖xd7!

On 65...♕b2+ 66 ♔h3 ♕f2, 67 ♗e4! ♕xf1+ 68 ♗g2 ♕f2 69 ♕b4+! holds.

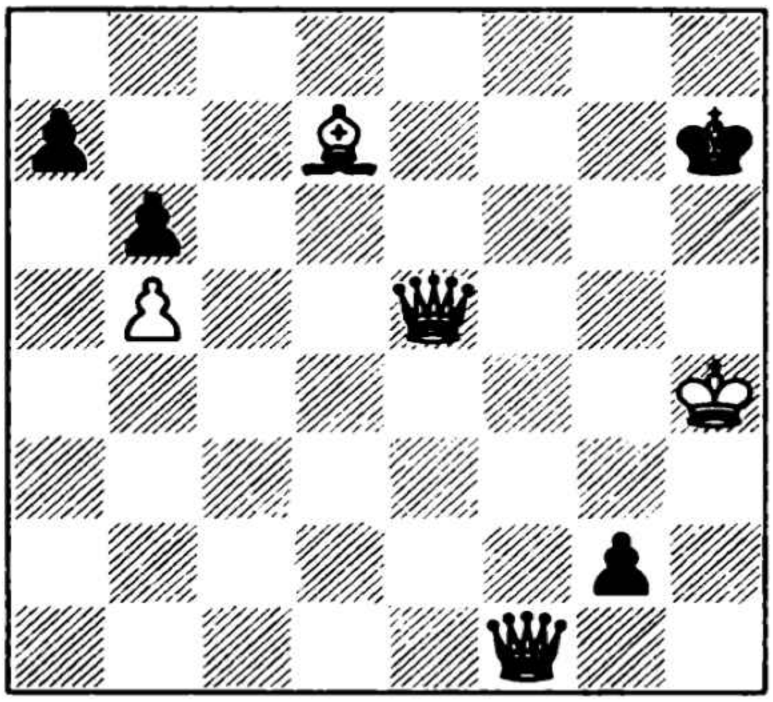
66 ♗xd7!

I thought this was a mistake at the time, but that he was lost anyway. Keres, however, has seen just one move further:

66 ... ♕f2+
67 ♔h3 ♕xf1+
68 ♔xh4 g2
69 ♕b4+ ♔f7!
70 ♕b3+ ♔g7
71 ♕g3+ ♔h7!

Haven—at last. Now I was sure I had him. Surely he would go in for 72 ♗f5+ ♕xf5 73 ♕xg2 ♕f4+! 74 ♕g4 (74 ♔h3 loses to 74...♕h6+!) 74...♕xg4+ 75 ♔xg4 ♔g6! gaining the opposition and winning White's last pawn by force.

72 ♕e5!! *(D)*



What's this? He makes no attempt to stop me from queening!? Gradually my excitement subsided. The more I studied the situation, the more I realised Black had no win.

72 ... ♕h1+

The main line also draws—by a miracle: 72...♕f2+ 73 ♔h3 g1♕ (promoting to a knight with check also doesn't win) 74 ♗f5+ ♔h6 (74...♕xf5+ 75 ♕xf5+ ♕g6 76 ♕xg6+ ♔xg6 77 ♔g4! is like the final note) 75 ♕f6+ ♔h5 76 ♗g6+! ♕xg6 77 ♕g5+!! ♔xg5 Stalemate!

73 ♗h3 ♕xh3+

After 73...g1♕, 74 ♕h5+ ♔g7 75 ♕g6+! White forces stalemate or a perpetual.

74 ♔xh3 g1♕
75 ♕e7+ ♔h8
76 ♕f8+ ♔h7
77 ♕f7+ ½-½

Black might have made one last try with 77...♕g7 78 ♕xg7+! ♔xg7, but White draws by 79 ♔g3! holding the 'distant opposition', for example 79...♔f6 80 ♔f4 ♔e6 81 ♔e4 ♔d6 82 ♔d4 ♔c7 83 ♔d5 ♔b7 84 ♔c4 ♔c7 85 ♔d5 ♔d7 86 ♔e5 and Black can't penetrate.

Game 38

Fischer – Keres [USSR]

Curaçao Ct 1962

Ruy Lopez

Detective story

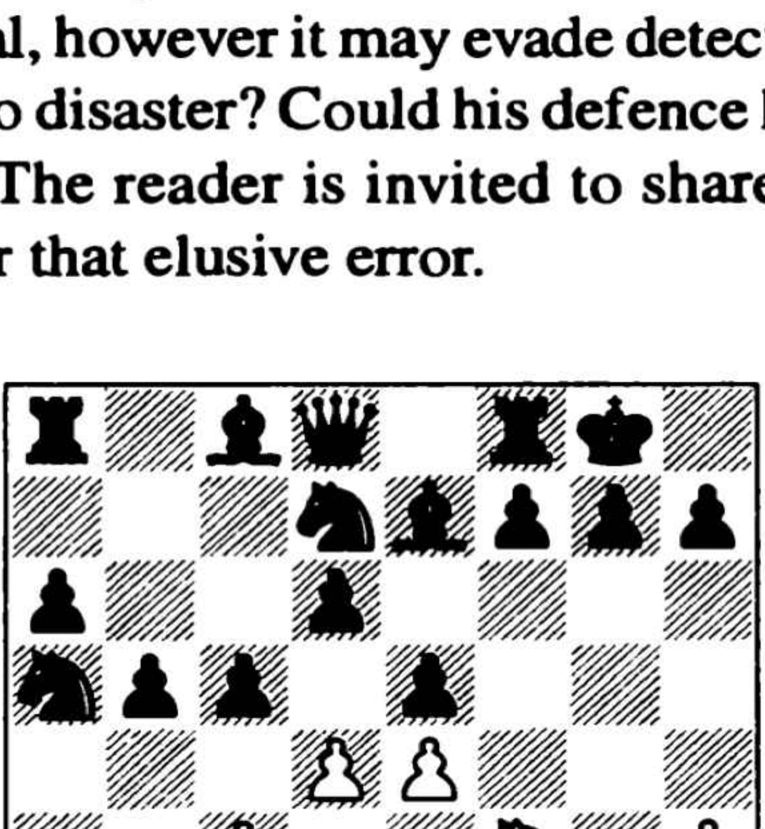
Occasionally one comes across a miraculous victory in which, despite intensive post-mortems, there seems to be no losing move or pattern, no blunder on the part of the vanquished. But how can that be possible? A loser must make a mistake somewhere, however infinitesimal, however it may evade detection. Is it Keres' opening novelty that leads him to disaster? Could his defence have been improved afterward? If so: where? The reader is invited to share the magnifying glass with Fischer and hunt for that elusive error.

1 e4 e5
2 ♘f3 ♘c6
3 ♗b5 a6
4 ♗a4 ♘f6
5 0-0 ♗e7
6 ♖e1 b5
7 ♗b3 d6
8 c3 0-0
9 h3

For 9 d4 see Game 36.

9 ... ♘a5
10 ♗c2 c5
11 d4 ♘d7 *(D)*

"Now it is not easy to find a satisfactory continuation for White." (Keres)



Keres' novelty, introduced on this occasion, has since become quite fashionable. I was, and still am, unimpressed. Black loses time redeveloping his knight to b6, but the kingside is weakened by its absence and it's questionable whether the knight is not better where it stands originally.

12 dxc5!

12 ♘bd2 was all the rage, but 12...cxd4 13 cxd4 ♘c6 may equalise. But not 12 dxe5 ♘xe5! with complete freedom.

"In spite of having won this game, it is probable that Fischer is not very convinced of the correctness of this continuation, because in a later game he closed the centre with 12 d5." (Keres)

According to that logic, Keres must not be convinced of the correctness of 11...♘d7 since he later varied with the old 11...♕c7 (against Gligorić at Hastings 1965).

12 ... dxc5

13 ♘bd2 ♕c7?

This is supposed to lead to trouble. If such a natural developing move is bad, then what kind of a position is this for Black? At the time Boleslavsky in his notes gave "13...f6! =" and this cryptic evaluation apparently cowed the chess world into abandoning 12 dxc5 until very recently. After 13...f6 14 ♘h4 ♘b6 15 ♘f5 ♖f7 (Fischer-Ivkov, Havana 1965), 16 ♕g4! (instead of my 16 ♘xe7+?) 16...♔h8 17 h4! threatening h5 followed by ♘f3-h4 is in White's favour, e.g. 17...g6 18 ♘h6 ♖g7 19 ♕f3, etc.

14 ♘f1 ♘b6

15 ♘e3 ♖d8

16 ♕e2 ♗e6

17 ♘d5!

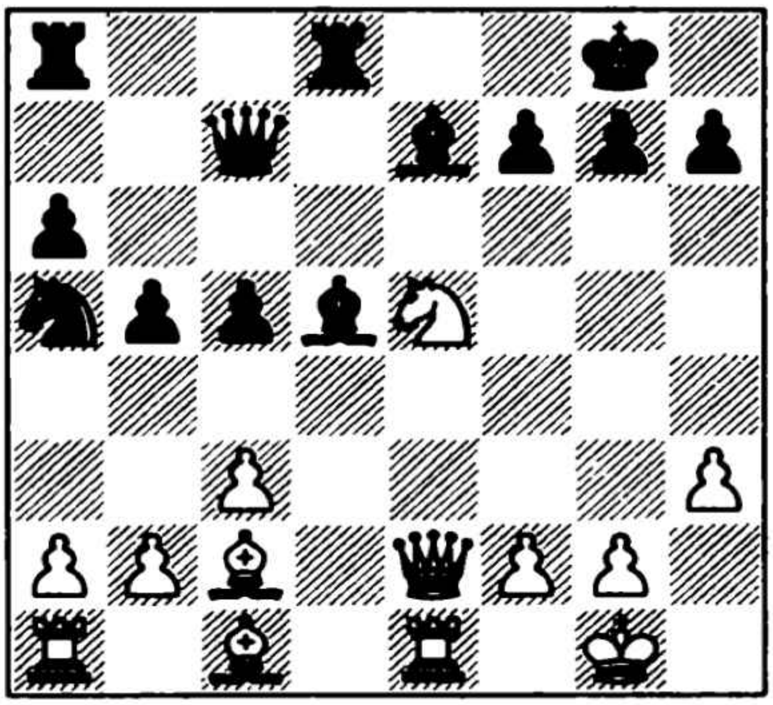
The idea is to open lines in order to take advantage of Black's weakened kingside.

17 ... ♘xd5

On 17...♗xd5 18 exd5 f6, 19 h4! is strong. Then if 19...♘xd5 (White wins after 19...♘ac4 20 h5 ♘d6 21 ♕d3! e4 22 ♖xe4! ♘xe4 23 ♕xe4), 20 h5 (threatening ♕e4) is powerful.

18 exd5 ♗xd5

19 ♘xe5 *(D)*



Since his early attacking days, Keres has switched to positional/defensive chess. But this type of position is too much even for him.

19 ... ♖a7

To defend the second rank. What else can Black do? White threatens to build up with ♗f4 and ♖ad1, and already sacrificial themes are in the air.

On 19...♗d6, 20 ♕d3! ♗xe5 21 ♕xh7+ ♔f8 22 f4 wins.

Or 19...♗e6 20 ♘xf7!.

Or 19...♗f8 20 ♛h5 g6 (if 20...h6, 21 ♘g4) 21 ♛h4 ♗g7 (if 21...♗e7, 22 ♛g3 threatening ♘xg6) 22 ♘g4.

Finally 19...f6 (19...♜e8? 20 ♛d3) 20 ♛h5! fxe5 21 ♗xh7+ ♔f8 22 ♜xe5 ♗f7 23 ♜f5 ♗f6 24 ♜xf6! gxf6 25 ♗h6+ ♔e7 26 ♜e1+ ♗e6 (if 26...♔d6, 27 ♗f4+ ♔c6 28 ♗e4+ wins) 27 ♗f5 ♜d6 28 ♗f4 wins.

20 ♗f4 ♛b6

The threat was ♘g6. On 20...♛c8, 21 ♜ad1 quietly continues the build-up.

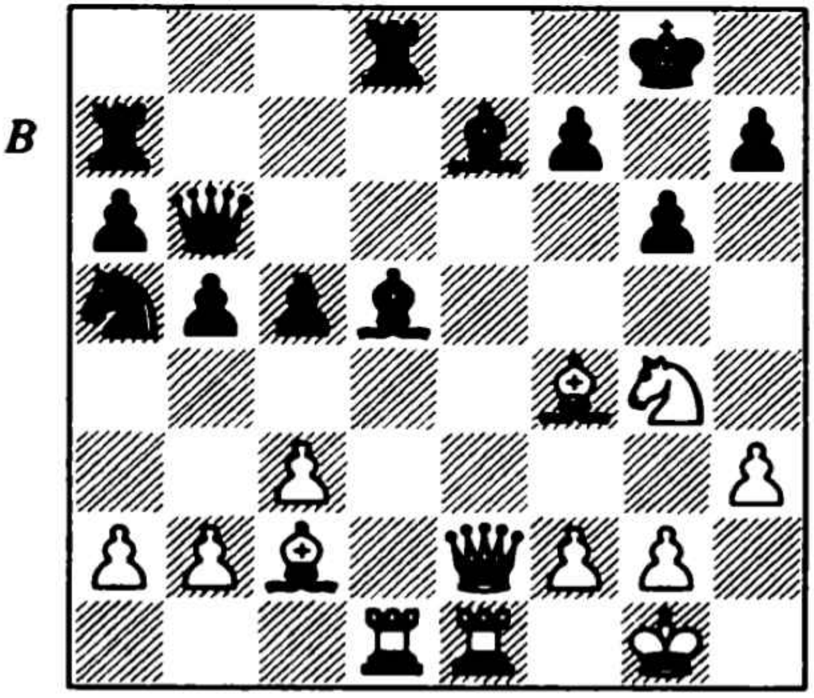
21 ♜ad1!

Threatening 22 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 23 ♛e4. Instead of seeking a 'violent solution', my instinct told me to strengthen the position.

21 ... g6

Eliminating stock combinations against h7, but creating new weaknesses on the dark squares. What's better? On 21...♗xa2 22 ♜xd8+ ♛xd8 (22...♗xd8 23 ♘c4! ♛e6 24 ♛d1 ♜d7 25 ♘d2) 23 b4! cxb4 24 cxb4 ♗xb4 (the knight can't move because of ♘c6), 25 ♛e4! ♗xe1 26 ♛xh7+ ♔f8 27 ♛h8+ ♔e7 28 ♗g5+ f6 29 ♘g6+ ♔d7 30 ♗f5+ ♔c7 31 ♗f4+ wins the queen.

22 ♘g4 ***(D)***



22 ... ♘c4

An attempt to bring this knight toward the embattled sector. After 22...♗xa2 23 ♜xd8+ ♛xd8 24 ♗h6! White has just too many threats. For example, 24...f5 (not 24...f6 25 b3! or 24...♗f8 25 ♛e8 ♜a8 26 ♘f6+ ♔h8 27 ♗xf8 winning) 25 ♛e5! ♗d6 (25...♗f8 26 ♛e8 ♛xe8 27 ♜xe8 ♜f7 28 ♘e5 ♜f6 29 ♘d7) 26 ♜d1! ♘c4 (if 26...fxg4 27 ♜xd6 ♜d7, 28 ♛g7+!! wins) 27 ♛e6+ ♔h8 (27...♜f7 28 b3 fxg4 29 bxc4 ♛h4 30 ♜xd6 ♛xh6 31 ♜d8+ ♔g7 32 ♛e5+) 28 b3! fxg4 29 bxc4 ♜d7 30 ♗g5! wins.

23 ♗h6

Some recommended the more direct 23 ♘h6+ ♔g7 24 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 25 ♘xf7. I thought this might win at the time, but it looked speculative and 25...♛f6! refutes. Since Black is tied up in knots, I felt sure of a patient strategic victory.

23 ... ♗e6

23...♘xb2 loses to 24 ♜xd5! ♜xd5 25 ♗e4 ♜d8 26 ♛xb2 f5 27 c4! (threatening ♛g7 mate).

24 ♗b3!

Pinning the knight and piling on the pressure.

24 ... ♛b8

To prevent White's queen, in some variations, from penetrating to e5.

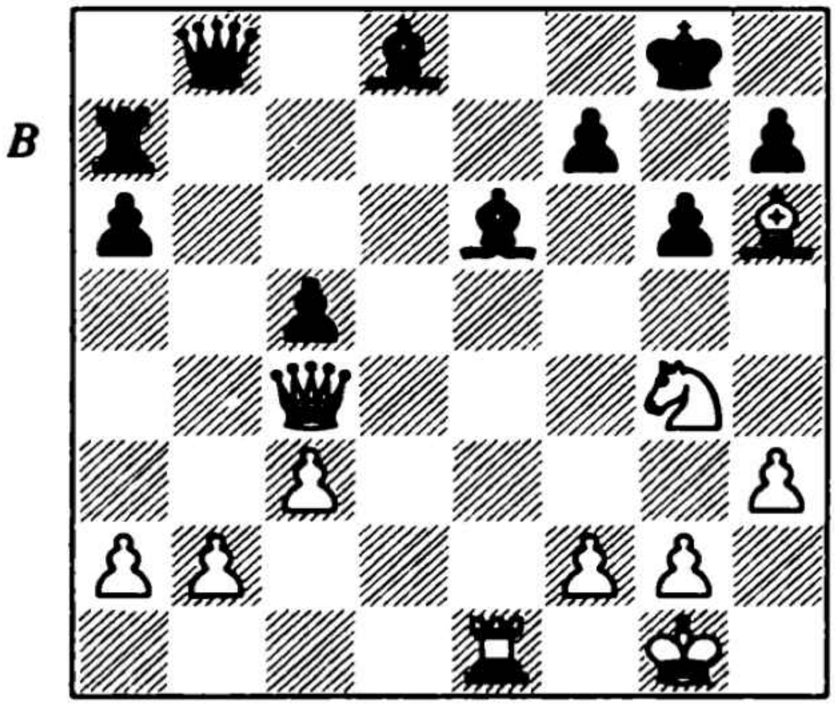
25 ♖xd8+ ♗xd8

Not 25...♕xd8? 26 ♗xc4 ♗xc4 (if 26...bxc4 27 ♕e5) 27 ♘f6+! ♔h8 27 ♕e5, etc.

26 ♗xc4 bxc4

27 ♕xc4! *(D)*

Cashing in! 'Converting a spatial advantage into a material one.' (See Evans' *New Ideas in Chess*.)



27 ... ♕d6

Not 27...♕xb2 losing to 28 ♖xe6! Or 27...♗xc4?? 28 ♖e8 mate.

28 ♕a4 ♕e7

29 ♘f6+ ♔h8

30 ♘d5 ♕d7

31 ♕e4!

Back to the old stand, angling for e5 again.

31 ... ♕d6

31...♗xd5? 32 ♕e8+ mates. The weakness of Black's first rank has consistently proved to be his undoing throughout the middlegame.

32 ♘f4

32 c4 is also good.

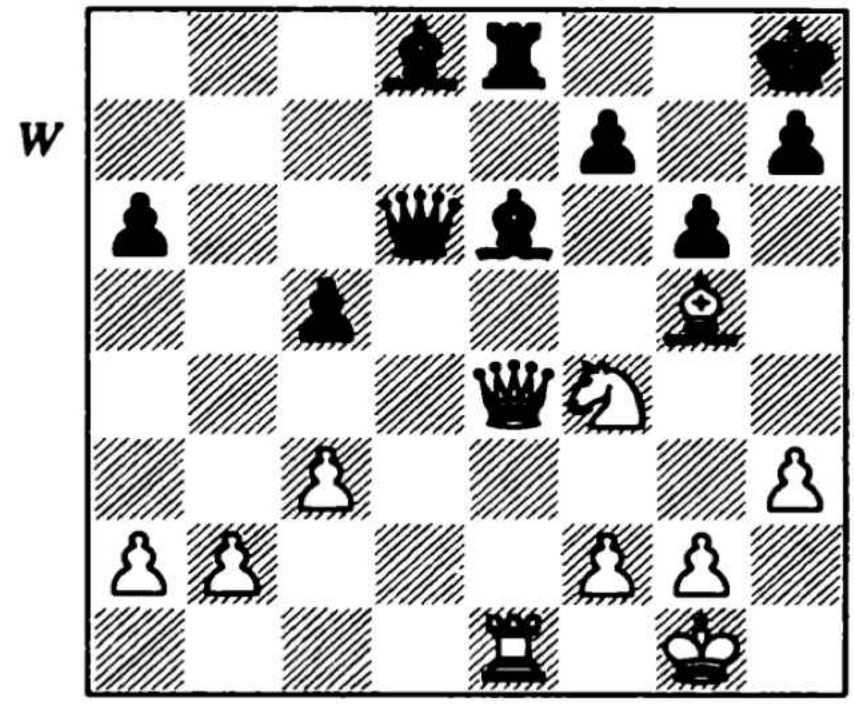
32 ... ♖e7

Token resistance.

33 ♗g5

33 ♗f8! wins outright.

33 ... ♖e8 *(D)*



34 ♗xd8 ♖xd8

On 34...♕xd8, 35 ♕e5+ f6 (not 35...♔g8 36 ♘d5!) 36 ♕xc5 ♗xa2 37 ♖xe8+ ♕xe8 38 c4 is the easiest path to victory.

35 ♘xe6 ♕xe6

On 35...♖e8, the reply 36 ♕e5+ is decisive.

36 ♕xe6 fxe6

37 ♖xe6 ♖d1+

38 ♔h2 ♖d2

39 ♖b6 ♖xf2

40 ♖b7! ♖f6

41 ♔g3 1-0

Not only is Black a pawn behind, but his king on the first rank is cut off as well. A likely winning line is 41...♔g8 42 b4 cxb4 43 cxb4 ♖d6 44 a4 ♖d3+ 45 ♔h2 ♖a3 46 a5 ♖a4 (if 46...♔h8 47 ♔g1 ♖a2 48 ♔f1 ♔g8 49 ♔e1 ♖xg2 50 b5 axb5 51 a6 ♖a2 52 a7) 47 ♔g3 and the king invades!

Game 39

Botvinnik [USSR] – **Fischer**

Varna OL 1962

Grünfeld Defence

The confrontation

This dramatic meeting between the generations took place on board 1 after it was rumoured that Botvinnik would be given a 'rest day' against the American team. But it was fated that Fischer, at last, albeit with Black, would have a crack at the world champion.

Walking into a prepared variation, Fischer promptly refutes it. "The reader can guess that my equanimity was wrecked," confesses Botvinnik, whose notes are incorporated here. Nervously, he proceeds to run his still tenable position downhill. But Fischer, instead of nursing his winning advantage, simplifies too quickly and reaches an adjournment where victory is problematical. After a sleepless night of analysis, Botvinnik finds a stunning defence. Fischer engages in a seemingly harmless transposition of moves (51...b5) and falls into a pit—throwing away the win he maintains was still there.

1 c4 g6

2 d4

If White so desires, he can prevent the Grünfeld by 2 ♘c3 ♘f6 3 e4.

2 ... ♘f6

3 ♘c3 d5

The spur of the moment. I could see by the glint in his eye that he had come well armed for my King's Indian.

4 ♘f3

The sharpest try is 4 cxd5 ♘xd5 5 e4.

4 ... ♗g7

5 ♕b3

The main line, but I don't believe this early development of the queen can give White anything.

5 ... dxc4

A solid alternative is 5...c6.

6 ♕xc4 0-0

7 e4 ♗g4

Also interesting is Donald Byrne's provocative 7...♘c6.

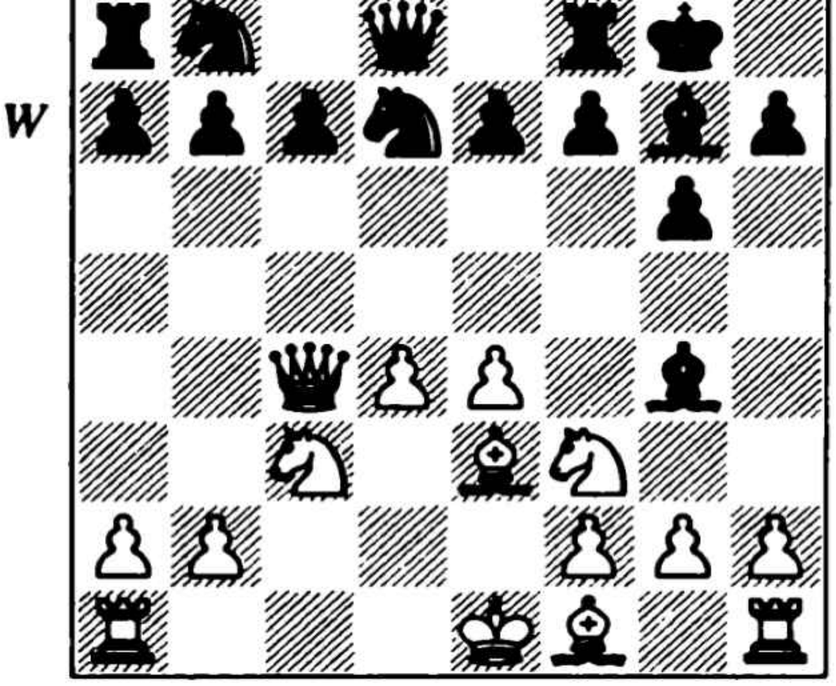
8 ♗e3

On 8 ♘e5, 8...♗e6 9 d5 ♗c8 followed by ...e6 equalises.

8 ... ♘fd7 *(D)*

Smyslov's Variation.

9 ♗e2



So far theory has found no way to derive any clear advantage for White.

a) 9 0-0-0 ♘c6 10 ♗e2 ♘b6 11 ♕c5 ♕d6 12 h3 ♗xf3 13 gxf3 f5! (13...♖fd8? 14 e5!, Reshevsky-Evans, Las Vegas 1965, practically forces a won endgame for White, in view of 14...♕d7? 15 d5! ♘xe5 16 f4) 14 d5 (14 e5 ♕xc5 15 dxc5 f4! is adequate) 14...♘e5 15 f4 (if 15 ♘b5? ♕f6 16 ♗d4 fxe4 17 fxe4 ♕f4+ etc.) 15...♘ed7 with a nice game.

b) 9 ♖d1 ♘c6 10 ♕b3 e5! 11 dxe5 ♗xf3 12 gxf3 ♘cxe5 13 ♗h3 ♘xf3+ 14 ♔e2! ♘fe5 15 ♗xd7 ♘xd7 16 ♕b5 c6 17 ♕xb7 ♖b8 18 ♕xd7 ♖xb2+ 19 ♔f1 ♕xd7 (Simagin's 19...♕f6 has also been analysed to a draw) 20 ♖xd7 ♗xc3= Evans-Fischer, US Ch 1962/3.

9 ... ♘c6

Botvinnik thinks 9...♘b6 first is more accurate.

10 ♖d1 ♘b6

10...♗xf3 followed by ...e5 also gives Black active play.

11 ♕c5 ♕d6!

12 h3

12 ♕xd6 is met by 12...cxd6! improving Black's pawn structure and neutralising White's centre.

12 ... ♗xf3

13 gxf3 ♖fd8

Wrong is 13...♕xc5 14 dxc5 ♗xc3+ 15 bxc3 ♘a4 16 ♔d2!. Botvinnik is of the opinion that 13...e6 (Furman) gives Black an equal game. But I feel it is not in the hypermodern spirit, which is precisely to tempt White into advancing his centre pawns in the hope they will become overextended.

14 d5

Opening the diagonal for Black's king's bishop can't be right, but White is still striving for an opening advantage. 14 e5 ♕xc5 15 dxc5 ♖xd1+ 16 ♔xd1 ♘d7 17 f4 g5! 18 fxg5 ♗xe5 is equal. Or 14 ♕xd6 (14 ♘b5 ♕xc5 15 dxc5 ♘a4!) 14...cxd6 with equality.

14 ... ♘e5

15 ♘b5

"At once 15 f4 is not good because of 15...♘ec4 16 ♗xc4 ♕xc5 17 ♗xc5 ♘xc4 18 e5 ♘xb2 19 ♖d4 f6! and White's central position breaks up." (Botvinnik)

After 15 f4, also playable is simply 15...♘ed7 16 ♕b5 (16 ♕xd6 cxd6 gives Black a comfortable ending) 16...e5! 17 f5 (17 dxe6 ♗xc3+! 18 bxc3 ♕xe6) with equal chances.

15 ... ♕f6!

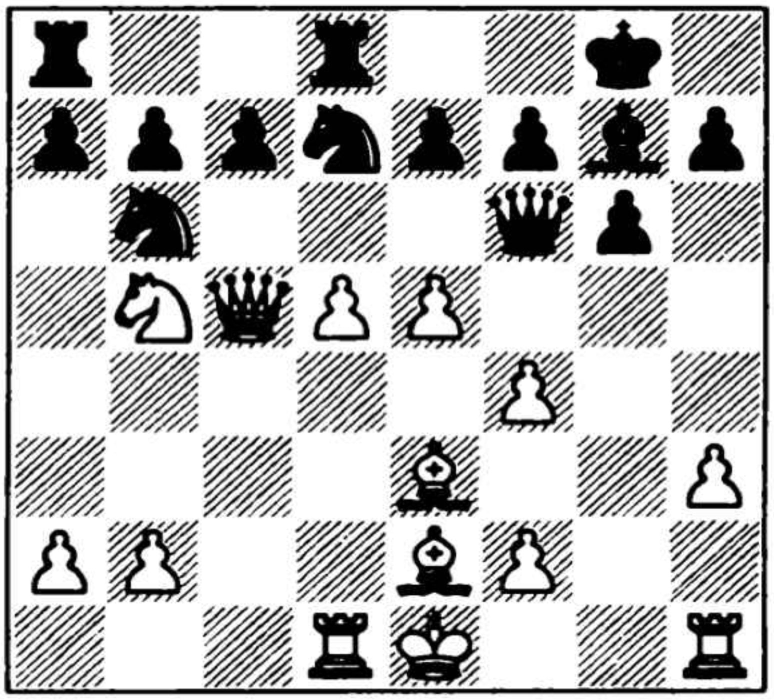
Weak is 15...♕xc5 16 ♗xc5 c6 17 ♘c7 (not 17 ♘xa7? ♘a4) 17...♖ab8 18 ♗xe7 ♖d7 19 d6 ♘c8 20 ♘e8! (not 20 f4 ♘xe7 21 fxe5 ♗xe5 22 dxe7 ♖xe7) 20...♘xe7 21 ♘xg7 ♔xg7 22 f4!.

16 f4 ♘ed7

17 e5 *(D)*

On 17 ♕xc7? ♕xb2 White can't castle and ...♕b4+ is threatened.

B



"When I was preparing to meet Smyslov, I, of course, made a thorough analysis of the Smyslov System in general and of the position in the diagram in particular! Here I reckoned that whether the black queen went to h4 or f5, it would be in danger; for example, 17...♕f5 18 ♕b4 a5 19 ♕d4, threatening ♗g4, or 17...♕h4 18 ♕c2 g5 19 ♖d4!.

"Alas, my opponent found a third continuation!" (Botvinnik)

17 ... ♕xf4!

"A very unpleasant surprise—now White really had to start playing. Up to here I had only had to remember my analysis, though that was not so easy. I had a recollection of the black queen being trapped somewhere on the kingside; and following this track I managed to recall the whole variation. At last everything was in order on the board was the familiar position; then suddenly it was obvious that in my analysis I had missed what Fischer had found with the greatest of ease at the board. The reader can guess that my equanimity was wrecked.

"However, if you assess 17...♕xf4 from an objective point of view, then although it is the best way out for Black, as you will see from what comes later, his position is still difficult." (Botvinnik)

When I made this move, I felt sure he had overlooked it.

18 ♗xf4

Black's last is tactically justified after 18 ♕xb6 ♕e4! 19 f3 ♕h4+! 20 ♗f2 ♕b4+ followed by ...axb6! (toward the centre).

18 ... ♘xc5

19 ♘xc7 ♖ac8

20 d6 exd6

21 exd6

Not 21 ♖xd6? ♘cd7.

21 ... ♗xb2

"So Black has won a pawn; but the knight on c7 and the pawn on d6 confine his rooks and also, White has two bishops. The first thing White must do is complete his development." (Botvinnik)

22 0-0 ♘bd7

"A bad mistake; evidently, Black overestimated his possibilities. Of course, he had to prepare the move ...♗e5; the only way this could be done was by 22...♘cd7 and after 23 ♗f3 ♗e5 24 ♗xe5 ♘xe5 25 ♗xb7 ♖b8 White has no more than a minimal advantage.

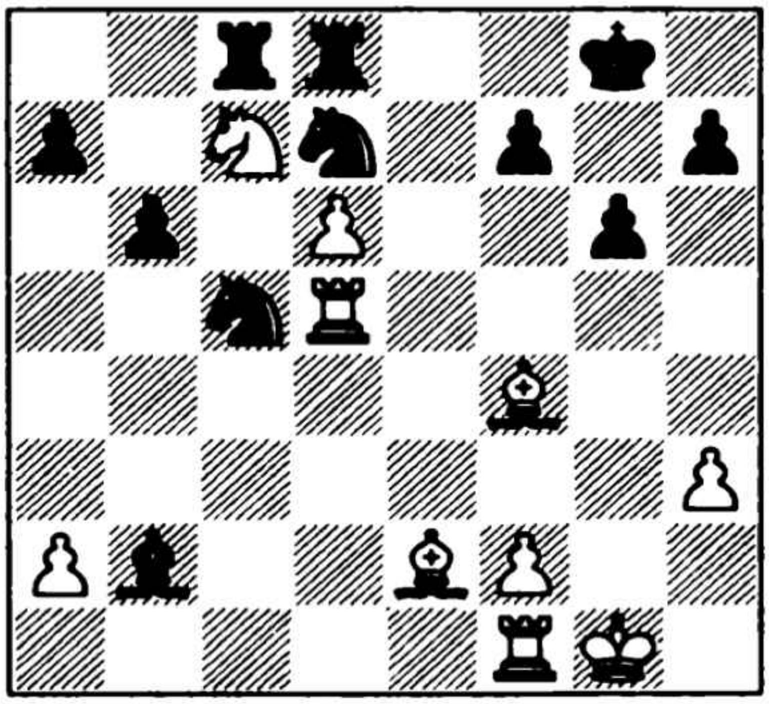
"Now White has the two important squares d5 and c4 at his disposal and his spatial advantage becomes crushing." (Botvinnik)

Needless to add, I couldn't disagree more. Why should Black return the pawn?

23 ♖d5

'Archives' recommends 23 ♘d5 but after 23...♔g7 the burden of proof rests with White—he's a pawn down.

23 ... b6 *(D)*



24 ♗f3?

"Feeble play. Actually, White had played quite consistently so far and here he could have deployed his force with maximum efficiency by 24 ♗c4! with the threat of ♖e1-e7.

"The bishop is out of it on f3 and merely becomes an object of attack. Black now frees himself and, a pawn down, White is in a critical position." (Botvinnik)

After 24 ♗c4! it is true that White has a bind, but with 24...♘e6 Black can practically force a draw, if he wants it, after 25 ♗h2 ♘d4 (threatening ...♘f6) 26 ♖b1 ♗c3 27 ♖c1 ♗b2, etc.

24 ... ♘e6!

"Apparently, this forces the exchange of the knight on c7, for 25 ♗h2 ♘d4 26 ♗g2 ♘f6 is very bad for White. In fact, even here 26 ♖xd4! (Geller) 26...♗xd4 27 ♖e1 gives White a real chance to get out of all his troubles. A second error running makes his position hopeless." (Botvinnik)

The reader is invited to judge for himself whether, in Geller's line, White has any real compensation for the exchange and a pawn. Here 27...♗c5 followed by ...♘f6 or ...♘f8 should extricate Black.

25 ♘xe6?

This really took me aback. After 25 ♗e3 at least White's still in the game.

25 ... fxe6

26 ♖d3

On 26 ♖dd1? (or 26 ♖d2? ♗c1 27 ♖d4 e5), 26...♖f8! 27 ♗g4 ♖xf4 28 ♗xe6+ ♖f7 wins.

26 ... ♘c5

27 ♖e3

The alternative 27 ♖d2 ♖f8 28 d7 ♖cd8 is bad.

27 ... e5

"The simplest. 27...♗d4 28 ♖a3 e5 29 ♗g5 ♖xd6 30 ♗e7 ♖d7 31 ♗g4 loses Black the exchange." (Botvinnik)

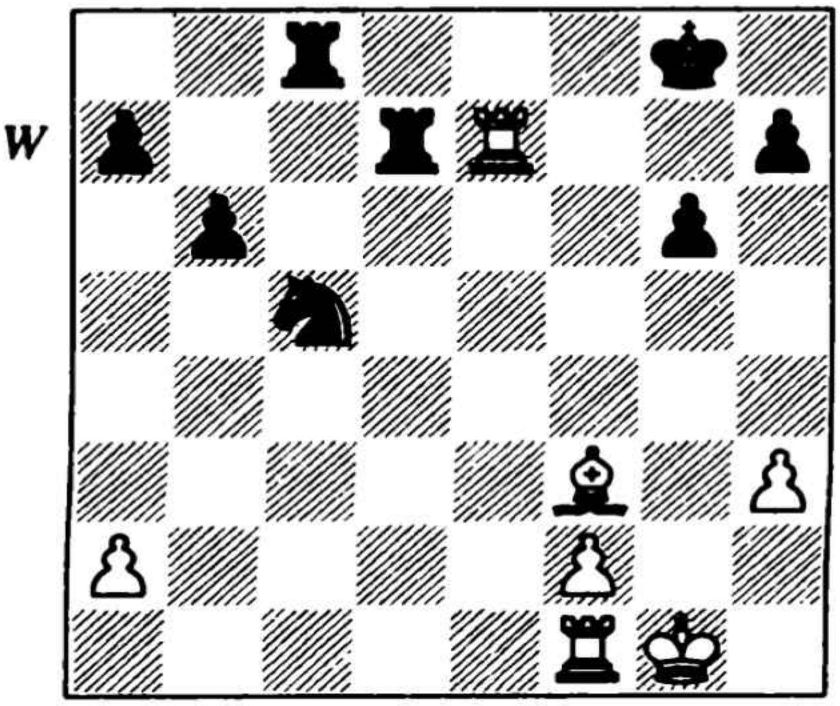
28 ♗xe5

Just leads to a dead lost ending. I expected 28 ♖xe5!? (hopeless though it is) to try and keep a little 'dynamic imbalance'.

28 ... ♗xe5

29 ♖xe5 ♖xd6

30 ♖e7 ♖d7 *(D)*



31 ♖xd7

31 ♖fe1 ♖cc7! flushes White off the 7th rank.

31 ... ♘xd7

32 ♗g4

"A pointless move, since White cannot go into the lost rook and pawn ending; he should have played at once 32 ♖e1 ♔f8 33 ♖e3 (or 33 ♗d5)—Black would still have had technical difficulties." (Botvinnik)

32 ... ♖c7

33 ♖e1 ♔f7

34 ♔g2

"And now 34 ♗e6+ was preferable, as the bishop is poorly posted at g4." (Botvinnik)

34 ... ♘c5

35 ♖e3 ♖e7

36 ♖f3+

"White's best practical chance consisted of an exchange of rooks and a position with his king on d4 (or e3) his bishop on c2 and his f-pawn at f4. But all that is impossible: 36 ♔f3 h5! and White loses his bishop." (Botvinnik)

36 ... ♔g7

37 ♖c3 ♖e4

38 ♗d1 ♖d4

"Before this I considered the game completely hopeless for me, but the text move gave me new heart: why had my opponent allowed my bishop to get to a good post (and the only good one!) at c2? Surely, by 38...♖e1! (39 ♗c2 ♖c1) White's defences could have been completely disorganised." (Botvinnik)

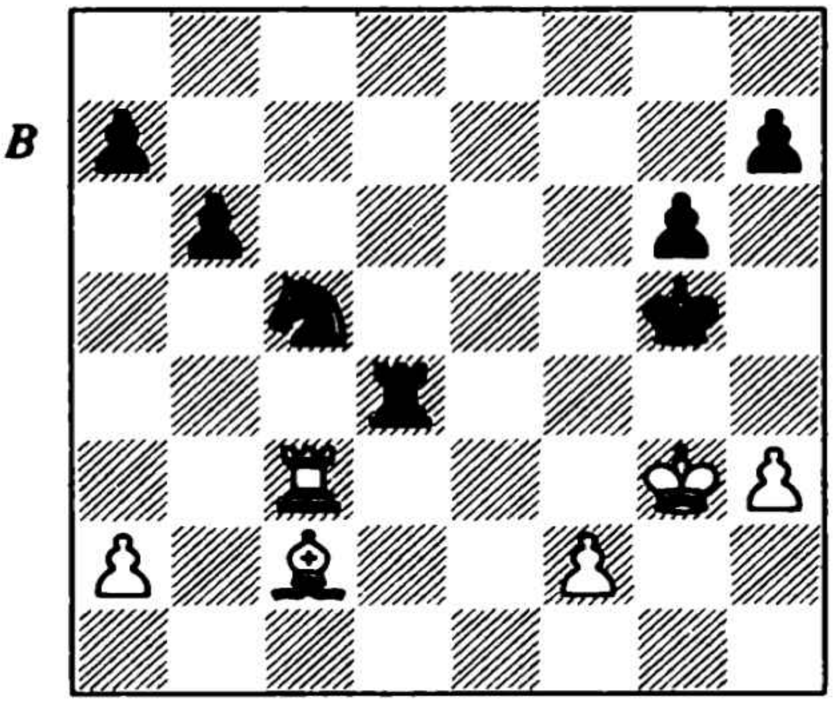
After 38...♖e1 simply 39 ♗f3 is more logical.

39 ♗c2 ♔f6

40 ♔f3 ♔g5

"In general terms, d6 is the best square for the king; for then the knight would not need to defend the b-pawn and Black would win by advancing his queenside pawns. But this manoeuvre is also not bad." (Botvinnik)

41 ♔g3 *(D)*



41 ... ♘e4+

"This could have led to an immediate draw—and just at the very moment when Black was nearing his goal. You see, White was already in zugzwang: against a king move Black plays ...♔h4 and ...♘e6-f4xh3; if ♗b1, the reply ...♖d1 wins; and if the white rook moves from its place, then ...♖c4 is decisive. So after, for instance, 41...♖b4 42 a3 ♖d4 43 f3 a5 White would have had no satisfactory reply.

"It is psychologically understandable why Black decided on the rook and pawn ending; earlier (see White's 23rd move) White had avoided it. But there is a difference between these two endings—the black king is in a bad position on g5." (Botvinnik)

Although I agree that Black can win by keeping the minor pieces and gradually improving his position, the text should also produce the same result, if only by a hair's breadth.

42 ♗xe4 ♖xe4

43 ♖a3

"Natural and bad. White is now in danger of defeat again. 43 ♖c7!! was essential, and White gets a draw as in the game. The fact that his pawn is on a2 and not a4 has no significance." (Botvinnik)

After 43 ♖c7 ♖a4 44 ♖xh7 ♖a3+! 45 f3 (after 45 ♔g2 ♖xa2 46 ♖b7 ♖a1 47 ♔f3 ♔f5 48 ♖f7+ ♔e5 49 ♖g7 b5 Black has gained a tempo over the game because White's pawn is on h3 instead of h4) 45...♖xa2 46 h4+ leads to the same ending as the game, except White has already played f3 which Botvinnik, for some reason, carefully avoided. So the difference may be significant.

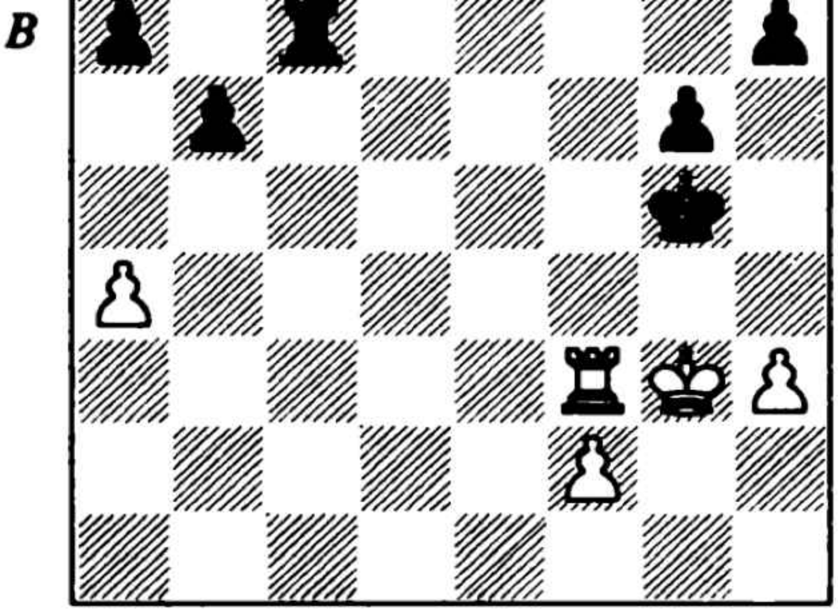
43 ... ♖e7

"Perhaps 43...a5! 44 ♖b3 ♖b4 is better: Black obtains either a won rook and pawn ending or—after 45 ♖xb4 axb4 46 f4+ ♔f5 47 ♔f3 ♔e6 48 ♔e4 (48 ♔g4 h6) 48...♔d6 49 ♔d4 b5 50 ♔d3 ♔d5—a probably won pawn ending." (Botvinnik)

44 ♖f3 ♖c7

"His last chance resided in improving the position of his king by the manoeuvre ...♔h6-g7." (Botvinnik)

45 a4 *(D)*



"Here Black sealed a move. White's threat is to exchange a pair of pawns on the queenside by a5 (for example, 45...♖c4 46 a5 bxa5 [or 46...b5 47 ♖f7] 47 ♖f7 a6 48 h4+ ♔h6 49 ♖d7) after which the weakness of Black's h-pawn together with the unfortunate position of his king would guarantee the draw.

"The most subtle move was 45...♔h6, although even then Black gets nowhere after 46 ♖d3! ♖c5 47 h4 ♖a5 48 ♖d4.

"What happened in the game is also most probably a draw." (Botvinnik)

The game was officially 'drawn' at breakfast. The Russian team had a table near the American team. Someone inquired of Botvinnik what he thought of the adjourned position. Hardly looking up from his plate, the world champion shrugged, "*Nicha*" (draw). The word quickly spread, and I overheard someone at the English table saying: "The Russians said Fischer could have won before adjournment ..."

46 ♖f7 ♖a5

47 ♖xh7!

"A very fine idea, found during overnight analysis by Geller. Because of his bad king position Black finds it difficult to mobilise his connected passed pawns." (Botvinnik)

This was the first defence I had considered! Passive play is hopeless: e.g. 47 ♖f4 ♖f5 48 ♖c4 ♖f7 followed by ...♔f5 and Black brings his king to the queenside.

47 ... ♖xa4

48 h4+!

I had analysed mainly 48 f4+ but Botvinnik's line is best and also contains a sly trap.

48 ... ♔f5

"Or 48...♔f6 49 ♖b7! ♖a5 50 ♔g4 b5 51 f4 a6 52 ♖b6+ ♔f7 53 ♖b7+ and White is quite safe." (Botvinnik)

49 ♖f7+ ♔e5

50 ♖g7

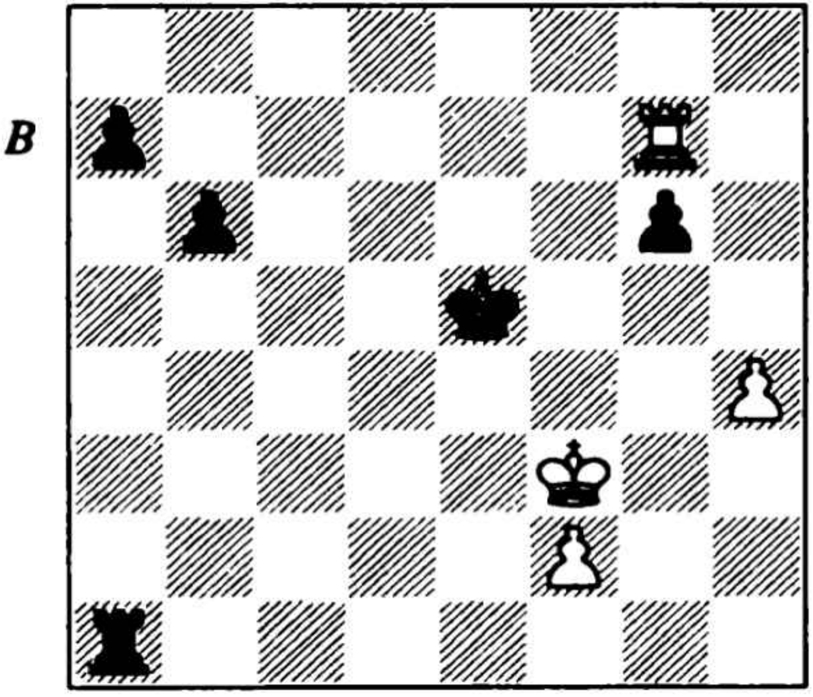
"The weakness of the g-pawn and a-pawn gives White sufficient counterplay." (Botvinnik)

50 ... ♖a1

51 ♔f3 *(D)*

51 ... b5?

Originally Botvinnik wrote in *Chess Life*: "This is a mistake in analysis. But even after 51...♔d5! 52 ♖xg6 b5 53 ♔e2 ♔c4 54 h5 b4 55 ♖g4+ ♔b5 (if 55...♔c3 or 55...♔b3, then 56 ♖h4 followed by h6-h7 is very strong) 56 ♔d3 the white king



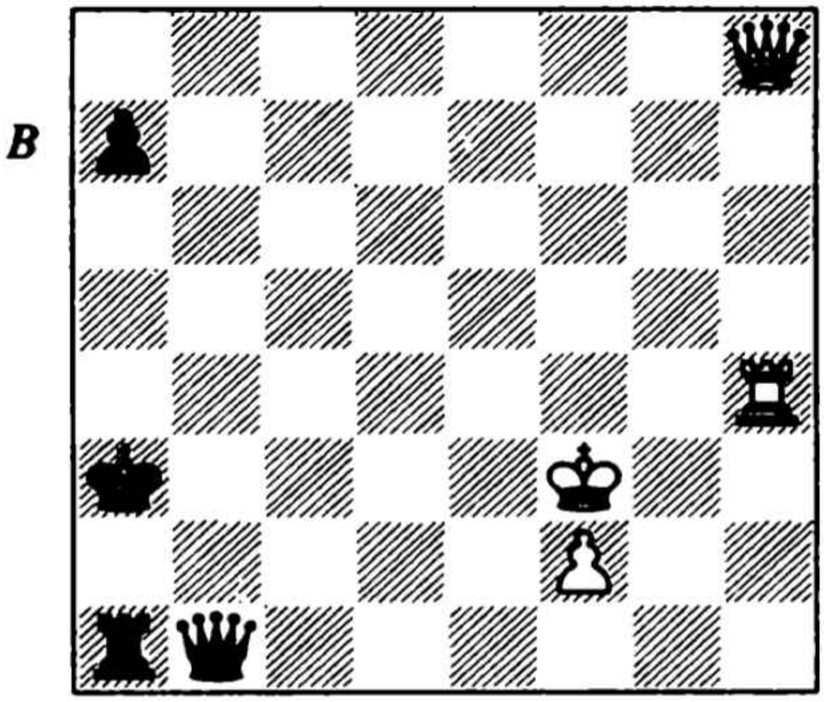
reaches the queenside and it is easy to credit the draw."

Later, in the 1962 Russian Yearbook, he analysed the entire ending more exhaustively and came to the conclusion, after considerable soul-searching, that it was drawn even against the best line: 51...♔d4!. The comments in square brackets are mine. "52 ♖xg6 b5 53 h5 b4 54 ♔g2 b3 55 h6 b2 56 h7 ♖h1! 57 ♔xh1 b1♕+ 58 ♔h2 ♕b8+ 59 ♔g1 ♕h8 [59...♕e5! seems to do the trick; if 60 ♖g8 ♕e1+ 61 ♔h2 ♕xf2+ 62 ♔h3 ♕f3+! forces the win of the h-pawn; or if 60 ♔f1 ♕h2 61 ♖g7 a5 62 ♖a7 ♔d3!] 60 ♖g4+ ♔c3 61 ♖h4 a5 62 ♔g2 ♔b3 63 ♖h3+ ♔c2 64 ♖h4 a4 65 ♖xa4 ♕g7+! (if 65...♕xh7 66 ♖g4 followed by ♖g3, and the rook holds the third rank, shuttling to e3, if necessary, keeping Black's king out—with a draw) 66 ♔f1 ♕xh7 wins, since White can't get his rook back to the third rank: e.g. 67 ♖a2+ ♔b3 [68 ♖a5 seems to hold here] or 67 ♖a3 ♕h1+ 68 ♔e2 ♕d1+ 69 ♔e3 ♕c1+ wins the rook. Or 67 ♖g4 ♕h1+ 68 ♖g1 (if 68 ♔e2 ♕d1+ wins the rook) 68...♕h3+ 69 ♖g2 (if 69 ♔e1 ♕f3 forces mate) 69...♔d2 70 ♔g1 ♔e1 wins (71 ♖g3 ♕f1+).

"Was it really true that the adjourned position was lost? Was I mistaken?" (Botvinnik)

Botvinnik then went on to give a corrected analysis which, as we shall see, also falls short. 51...♔d4! 52 ♖xg6 b5 53 h5 b4 54 h6! (instead of his previous 54 ♔g2) 54...b3 (if 54...♖h1, 55 ♔g2! ♖h5 56 ♖a6 b3 57 ♖xa7 ♖xh6 58 ♖b7 ♔c4 59 ♔f3 leads to a theoretical draw) 55 ♖g4+ (if 55 h7 ♖h1 56 ♖g7 a5 wins) 55...♔c5! (not 55...♔c3? 56 ♖h4 and White queens with check; or 55...♔d3? 56 ♖b4 ♔c2 57 ♖c4+ draws) 56 ♖g5+ ♔c6! [Here I break camp with Botvinnik, only to meet at the next diagram. He gives 56...♔b4 overlooking that White can obtain an immediate draw with 57 ♖g7! b2 (57...a5? loses to 58 ♔g2!) 58 h7 ♖h1! 59 ♖xa7 ♔b3 60 ♖b7+ ♔c2 61 ♖c7+ ♔d2 62 ♖b7, etc.] 57 ♖g6+ ♔b7! 58 ♖g7+ (if 58 ♖g4 a5 wins) 58...♔a6! (the idea is to keep the king off the b-file so that White's rook can't check from behind) 59 ♖g6+ (if 59 ♔g2 b2 60 h7 b1♕ 61 h8♕ ♕e4+! and White is bombarded with checks which lead to probable mate, certainly win of material) 59...♔a5! (not 59...♔b5? 60 ♖g7 a5? 61 ♔g2! wins) 60 ♖g5+

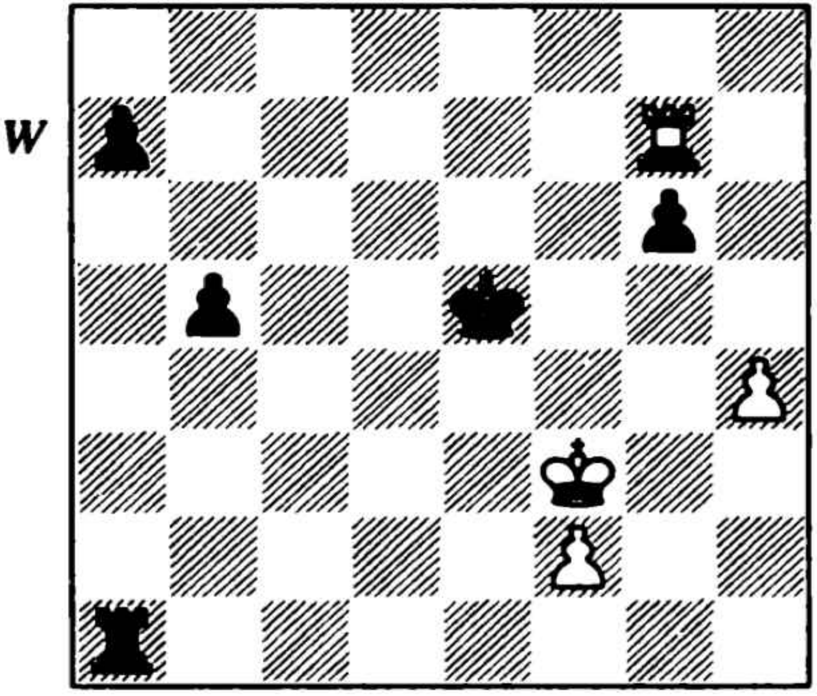
(if 60 ♖g7? b2 61 ♖xa7+ ♔b6 wins) 60...♔a4! (finally Black has crawled up along the a-file) 61 ♖g4+ (61 ♖g7 a5 62 ♖b7 ♖h1 is easy; or 61 ♖h5 b2 62 h7 b1♕ 63 h8♕ ♕d3+ 64 ♔f4 ♖e1! is the pause that refreshes—White is checkless—if 65 ♖e5 ♕d4+ 66 ♔f5 ♕xf2+ 67 ♔e6 ♕b6+ is decisive) 61...♔a3 62 ♖h4 b2 63 h7 b1♕ 64 h8♕ *(D)*.



Botvinnik also reached this position in his analysis independently, and concluded that it was a draw. However, it is precisely here, in this barren wilderness, that Black can wend his way to a win.

Correct is 64...♕b3+! 65 ♔e2 (if 65 ♔f4 ♕f7+ or 65 ♔g2 ♕d5+ 66 f3 ♕d2+) 65...♕d1+ 66 ♔e3 ♖b1!! 67 ♕f8+ (not 67 ♕c3+? ♖b3 or 67 ♖h3 ♔a2! 68 ♕g8+ ♕b3+ wins) 67...♔a2 and White's king will be without shelter from the coming avalanche of checks.

Now to return to the dreary (for me) game, after 51...b5 *(D)*.



52 h5!

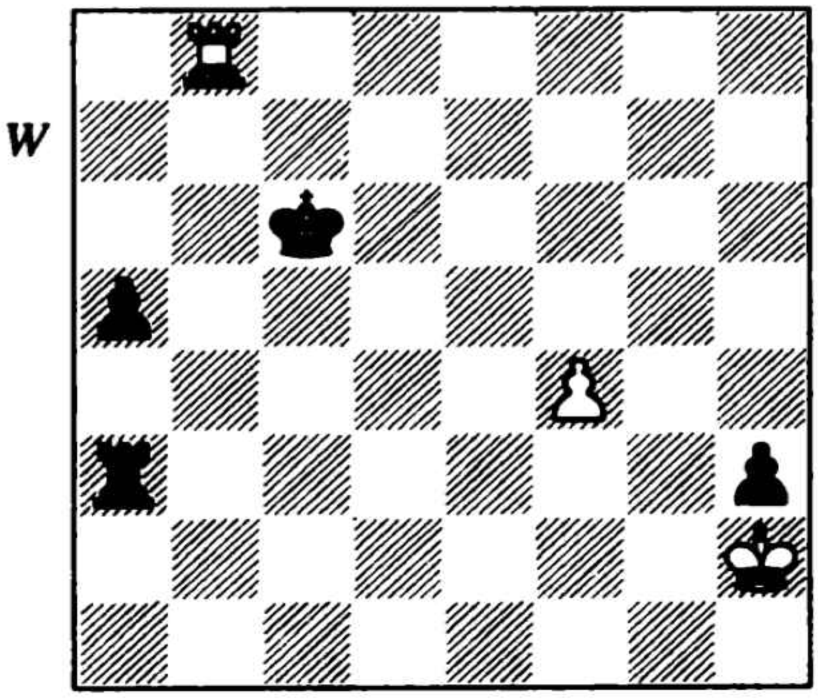
"Now Black is left with two rooks' pawns and the draw becomes a question of theory." (Botvinnik)

The move I overlooked. 52 ♖xg6 ♔d4 transposes into the note to Black's 51st.

52 ... ♖a3+
53 ♔g2 gxh5

Botvinnik visibly relaxed. I had played right into his hands.

54 ♖g5+ ♔d6
55 ♖xb5 h4
56 f4 ♔c6
57 ♖b8! h3+
58 ♔h2 a5 *(D)*



60 ♖b5 ♔d6

"Generally speaking, this ending would be drawn even without White's f-pawn—any textbook on the endgame will tell you this." (Botvinnik)

61 f6 ♔e6
62 ♖b6+ ♔f7
64 ♖c6 a4
65 ♖a6 ♔f7
66 ♖c6 ♖d3
67 ♖a6 a3
68 ♔g1 ½-½

"Too many mistakes?' the reader may justly ask. Yes, there were rather a lot!" (Botvinnik)

Game 40

Fischer – Najdorf [Argentina]

Varna OL 1962

Sicilian Defence

The Najdorf Variation

The durable Najdorf Variation remains Fischer's favourite, and he constantly experiments when confronted with it. Here, against the originator of the defence, he employs an unorthodox continuation. Najdorf counters sharply, launching an early struggle.

In order to preserve the initiative, Fischer gambits a pawn with 7 ♘d5. Najdorf unwisely declines, only to accept three moves later under more unfavourable circumstances. He loses his way in the complications, allowing a devastating sacrifice which pins his king in the centre. Although Najdorf defends with precision, it is too late to compensate for his earlier dilatory tactics. He finds himself ensnarled in a mating net after twenty-four moves. Rather than prolong his agony, the grand old master tenders his resignation.

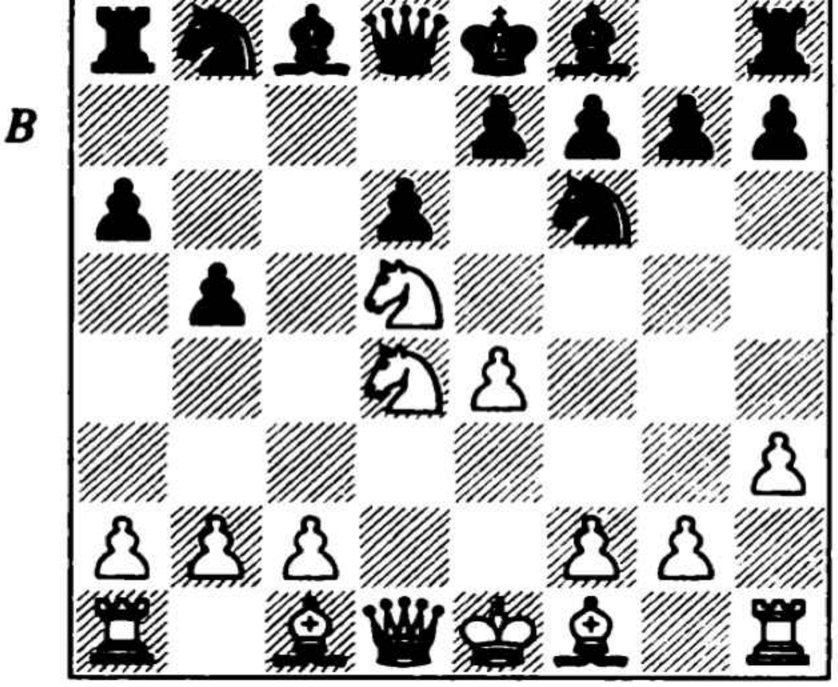
1 e4 c5
2 ♘f3 d6
3 d4 cxd4
4 ♘xd4 ♘f6
5 ♘c3 a6
6 h3

For 6 ♗g5 see Games 9 and 15. For 6 ♗e2 see Games 4 and 42. For 6 ♗c4 see Games 17, 55 and 58.

6 ... b5!?

The sharpest reply. For 6...g6 see Game 43. For 6...♘c6 see Game 35.

7 ♘d5!? *(D)*



The idea is to exploit the hole on c6. Najdorf apparently underestimated the strength of this 'eccentric' move which appears to violate opening principles by moving the same piece twice.

A good alternative was 7 a4.

7 ... ♗b7?

Black's subsequent troubles can be traced to this. Even worse is the blunder 7...♘bd7?? 8 ♘c6 winning the queen. And on 7...♘fd7, 8 ♗g5! h6? 9 ♘e6!.

After 7...e6 8 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 9 c4 b4 Black's queen is misplaced and his queenside has been weakened.

The complications stemming from 7...♘xe4! 8 ♕f3 ♘c5 are unclear. There are two main lines:

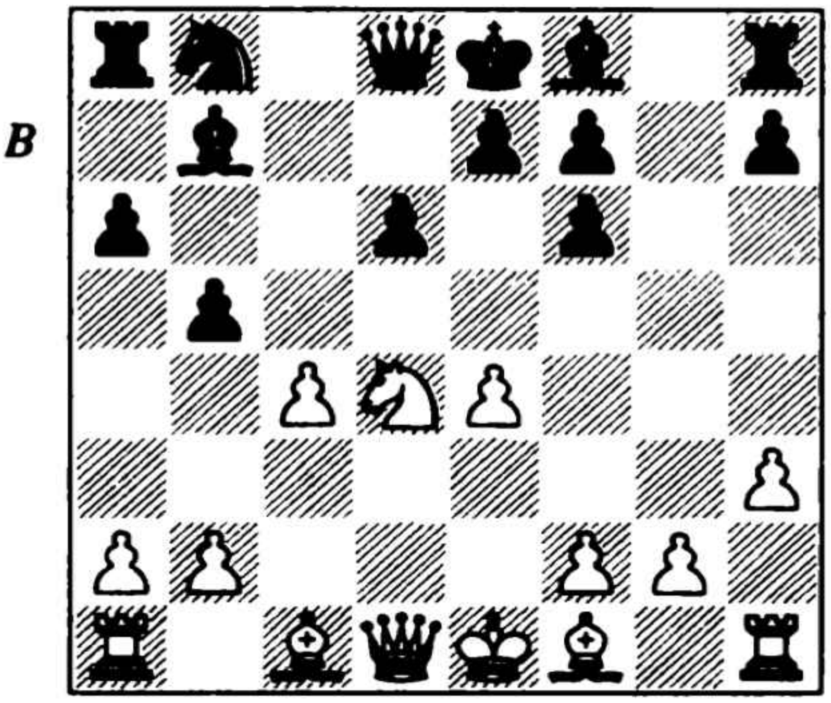
a) 9 ♘f6+? gxf6 10 ♕xa8 ♗b7 11 ♕a7 ♕c7 (or 11...e5 12 b4 exd4 13 bxc5 ♕e7+ 14 ♗e2 ♘c6 15 ♕b6 dxc5 16 0-0! is good for White) 12 b4 ♘cd7 and Black has excellent play for the exchange.

b) 9 b4! e6 (not 9...♘b7? 10 ♕c3! but interesting is 9...♘cd7 10 ♕c3! ♖a7 11 ♗g5!? or even 11 ♗xb5) 10 bxc5 (or 10 ♘f6+ ♕xf6 11 ♕xa8 ♕xd4 12 ♕xb8 ♕xa1 13 ♕xc8+ ♔e7) 10...exd5 11 ♕xd5 ♖a7 =.

8 ♘xf6+ gxf6

9 c4! *(D)*

White must play sharply, else his advantage evaporates. After the tame 9 ♗d3, 9...♘d7 is tenable.



9 ... bxc4

Had Najdorf correctly evaluated the results of this decision, he would have chosen 9...b4. The 1962 Russian Yearbook gives 9...♗xe4 10 cxb5 ♗g7 11 ♕g4 ♗g6 12 ♘f5 with advantage, but 12...0-0 is unclear.

10 ♗xc4 ♗xe4

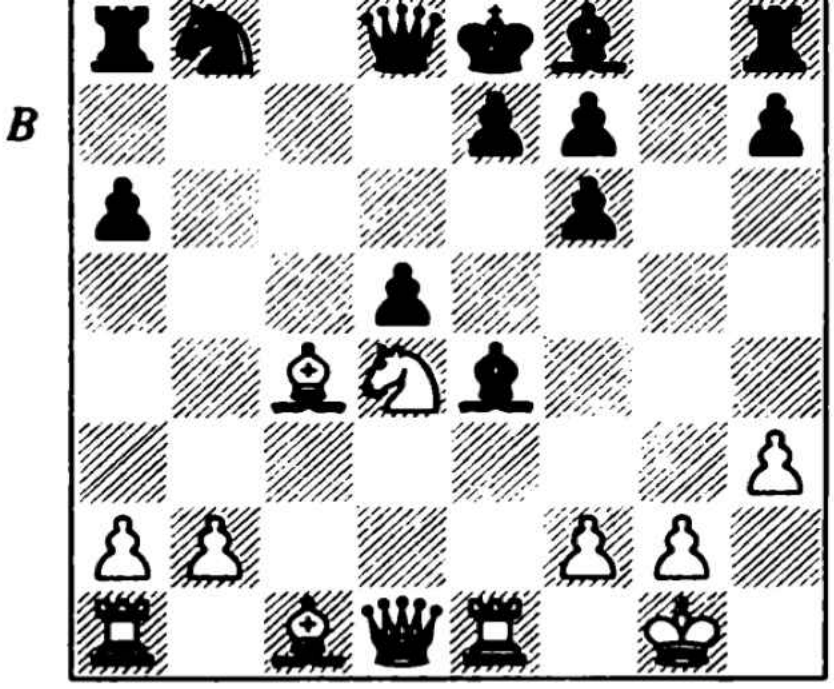
10...♕a5+ 11 ♗d2 ♕e5 12 ♕b3! ♕xe4+ 13 ♔d1 gives White a very strong attack.

11 0-0 d5

12 ♖e1! *(D)*

12 ... e5

a) 12...♖g8 13 ♖xe4! dxe4 14 ♕h5 ♖g7 (if 14...♖g6, 15 ♕xh7 ♖g7



16 ♕xe4 ♖a7 17 ♘f5 or 17 ♗f4) 15 ♘f5, etc.

b) 12...e6 13 ♕h5 ♗g6 14 ♕xd5 ♕xd5 15 ♗xd5 ♖a7 16 ♗f4 ♖d7 17 ♘xe6 fxe6 18 ♗xe6 ♘c6 19 ♖ac1, etc.

c) 12...h5 13 ♖xe4! dxe4 14 ♕b3! ♕xd4 15 ♗e3 gives White a winning attack.

d) 12...♘d7 13 ♘c6 ♕c7 14 ♗xd5, etc.

e) 12...♗xg2 13 ♔xg2 dxc4 14 ♕f3 ♘d7 15 ♘f5 ♖g8+ (15...e6 allows 16 ♖xe6+! fxe6 17 ♕h5 mate) 16 ♔h1 e5 (if 16...e6, then 17 ♕c6 threatening ♖xe6+) 17 ♗e3 with a winning bind despite the two-pawn deficit.

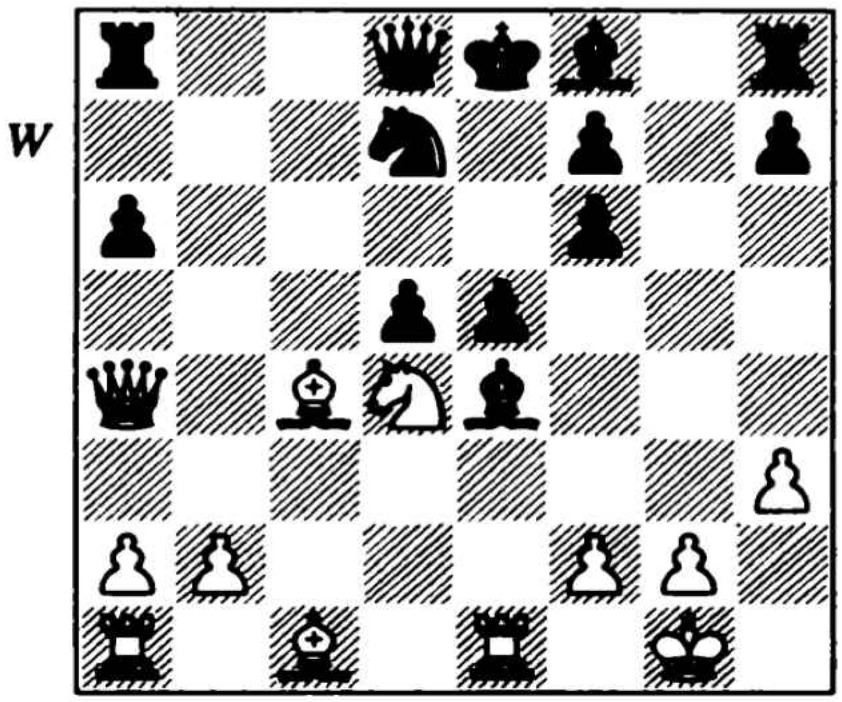
f) Relatively best is 12...dxc4 13 ♖xe4 ♕d5 14 ♕f3 e6.

13 ♕a4+!

Inferior is 13 ♖xe4 dxe4 14 ♕a4+ ♕d7 15 ♗b5 axb5 16 ♕xa8 exd4 17 ♕xb8+ ♔e7, etc.

13 ... ♘d7 *(D)*

After 13...♕d7 14 ♗b5! axb5 15 ♕xa8 ♗d6 16 ♖xe4! dxe4 17 ♕xe4 followed by ♘f5 White has a powerful bind.



14 ♖xe4! dxe4

14...dxc4 15 ♘f5 leads to the same type of position as the game, except Black is without any material compensation.

15 ♘f5!

Perhaps Black had hoped for 15 ♕b3 ♕b6 16 ♗xf7+ ♔d8 with some chances for survival.

15 ... ♗c5

16 ♘g7+! ♔e7

On 16...♔f8, 17 ♗h6 ♔g8 18 ♕b3 is murder.

17 ♘f5+ ♔e8

We are back where we started, but in the meantime Black has lost the right to castle.

18 ♗e3

Tal suggested 18 ♗h6 but after 18...♖a7 19 ♖d1 ♕b6 Black is still alive. The text robs Black of any possible counterplay.

18 ... ♗xe3

19 fxe3

The exchange of bishops has failed to ease Black's defensive task. The threat of ♘d6+ is now in the offing.

19 ... ♕b6

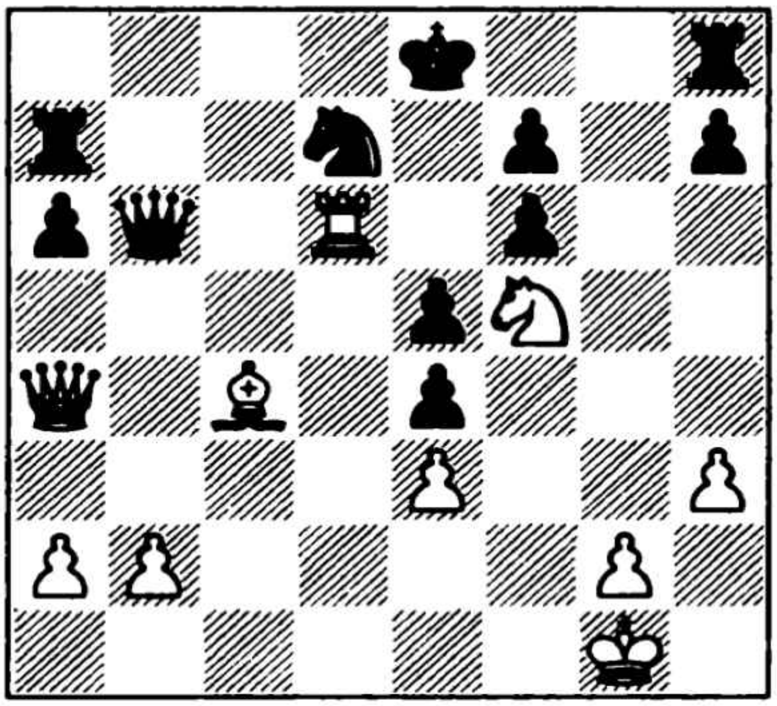
20 ♖d1

Again after 20 ♗xf7+ ♔d8! 21 ♖d1 ♕b5 White has no immediate forced win.

20 ... ♖a7

21 ♖d6! *(D)*

The crusher! Other lines, such as 21 ♗xf7+ ♔d8 and 21 ♘d6+ ♔e7, allow resistance.



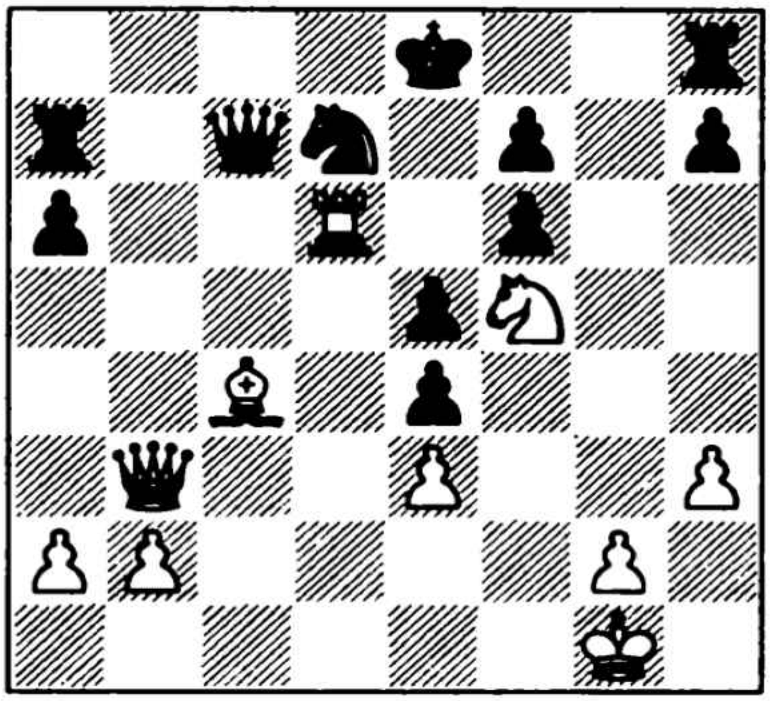
21 ... ♕d8

The best chance in very difficult circumstances.

On 21...♕c7, 22 ♖xf6 wins. And on 21...♕xb2, 22 ♗xf7+! (finally!) 22...♔xf7 (if 22...♔d8, then 23 ♕a5+ ♔c8 [23...♖c7 24 ♗e6 wins for White] 24 ♘e7+ ♔b8 25 ♘c6+ ♔a8 26 ♘xa7 wins) 23 ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 24 ♕xd7+ ♔g6 25 ♕g7+ ♔xf5 26 ♕g4 mate.

22 ♕b3 ♕c7 *(D)*

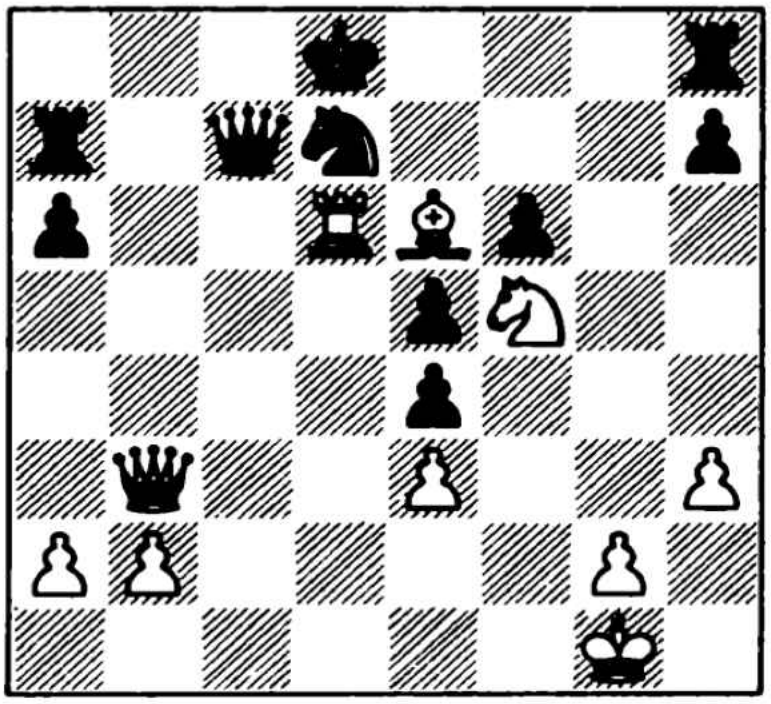
On 22...♖f8, 23 ♘g7+ ♔e7 24 ♕a3! is very decisive.



23 ♗xf7+ ♔d8

After 23...♔f8 24 ♗h5 White forces mate.

24 ♗e6 *(D)* **1-0**



Najdorf has no taste for prolonging the torture. For example, after 24...♖b7 25 ♕a4 ♕c8 26 ♕a5+ ♔e8 27 ♕xa6 ♔d8 28 ♗xd7 ♖xd7 29 ♖xd7+ ♕xd7 (29...♔xd7 30 ♕d6+ ♔e8 31 ♕e7 mate) 30 ♕xf6+ ♔c7 31 ♕xe5+ ♔b6 32 ♕xh8 White has a winning endgame.

Varna OL 1962

Scandinavian Defence

A bright cameo

Facing one of Robatsch's pet lines, Fischer proceeds to institute such a crisp attack that one is reminded of Morphy in his heyday. Noteworthy are White's 5th and 6th, practically refuting the whole variation.

Seeking safety for his king, Robatsch makes the mistake of castling too early. Fischer, already castled on the opposite wing, incurs no risk advancing his kingside pawns, using them as battering rams to pry open the g-file. Robatsch is unable to effect a closure and Fischer rushes into the breach—compelling resignation in only twenty moves.

1 e4 d5
2 exd5 ♕xd5

This old move is considered weak but Black has a new twist in mind. The modern way is 2...♘f6. Then White has the choice of either 3 c4 or 3 ♗b5+ to hold the pawn, or simply 3 d4. Against Bergrasser at Monaco 1967, I chose 3 ♗b5+ ♗d7 4 ♗c4 ♗g4 5 f3 ♗f5 (safer is 5...♗c8) 6 g4! ♗c8 7 ♘c3 ♘bd7 8 g5 ♘b6 9 ♗b5+ ♘fd7 10 f4 ♘xd5 11 ♘xd5 c6 12 ♗c4 cxd5 13 ♗xd5 and White's extra pawn should prevail.

3 ♘c3 ♕d8

A hypermodern approach, championed by Bronstein. The idea is to give up the centre and then play against it. Seidman, as Black, played the more traditional 3...♕a5 against me in the 1958/9 US Ch, which continued: 4 d4 ♘f6 5 ♘f3 ♘c6 6 d5!? (possibly an improvement over the usual 6 ♗b5) 6...♘b4 7 ♗b5+ c6 (more crucial is 7...♗d7 8 ♗xd7+ ♘xd7 9 a3 ♘f6 10 axb4 ♕xa1 11 0-0 ♕a6 12 ♖e1 with a terrific attack. Not 12...0-0-0? 13 ♘e5) 8 dxc6 bxc6 9 ♗a4 ♗a6? (9...♗d7 is necessary) 10 a3! ♖d8 11 ♗d2 ♕f5 12 axb4 ♖d6 13 ♗b3 ♘e4 14 ♖xa6 ♖xd2 15 ♕c1 ♘xc3 16 bxc3 ♖d6 17 0-0 1-0.

4 d4 g6!?

The idea is to reserve the option of developing the king's knight to h6 followed by ...♘f5 with pressure on the d-pawn. After the game Robatsch told me he'd enjoyed excellent results with this system.

5 ♗f4!

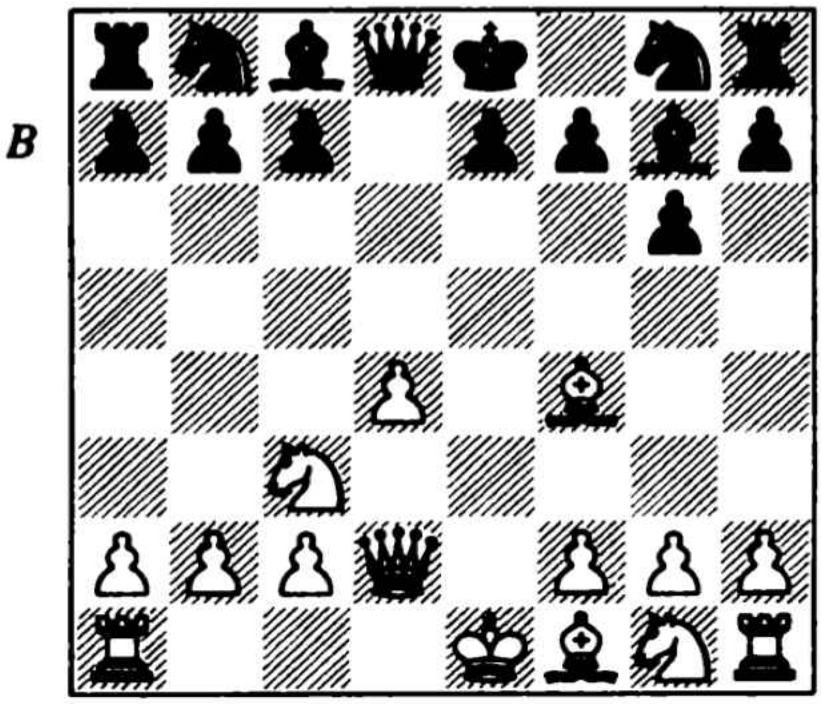
Against the pedestrian 5 ♘f3 (or 5 ♗c4 ♗g7 6 ♘f3 ♘h6) 5...♗g7 6 h3 ♘f6 (not 6...♘h6 7 g4! Sokolsky) White holds no more than a minimal edge.

5 ... ♗g7

On 5...♘h6, 6 ♗e5! f6 7 ♗f4 messes up Black's pawns.

6 ♕d2! *(D)*

Ignoring the 'threat'. Weak is 5 ♘b5 ♘a6 followed by ...c6 etc. (Bronstein-Kholmov, USSR 1959). And 5 ♘f3 ♘h6 would permit Black the set-up he is striving for.



6 ... ♘f6

Stymied, Black can no longer play ...♘h6.

The main line is 6...♕xd4 7 ♕xd4 ♗xd4 8 ♘b5 ♗b6 (forced) 9 ♘xc7+ ♗xc7 10 ♗xc7 with the two bishops and all the chances. Another possibility is 6...♗xd4? 7 0-0-0 ♘c6 8 ♗b5 ♗d7 9 ♘d5! (but not 9 ♗xc6? ♗xc6 10 ♕xd4? ♕xd4 11 ♖xd4 ♗xg2) 9...e5 10 ♘f3 and Black will never get out of the opening alive.

7 0-0-0 c6

Better is 7...♘d5 8 ♗e5 (after 8 ♗h6!? ♗xh6 9 ♕xh6 ♘xc3 White's pawns are ruptured) 8...0-0 9 h4 h5 10 ♘ge2 with a clear advantage but no forced win.

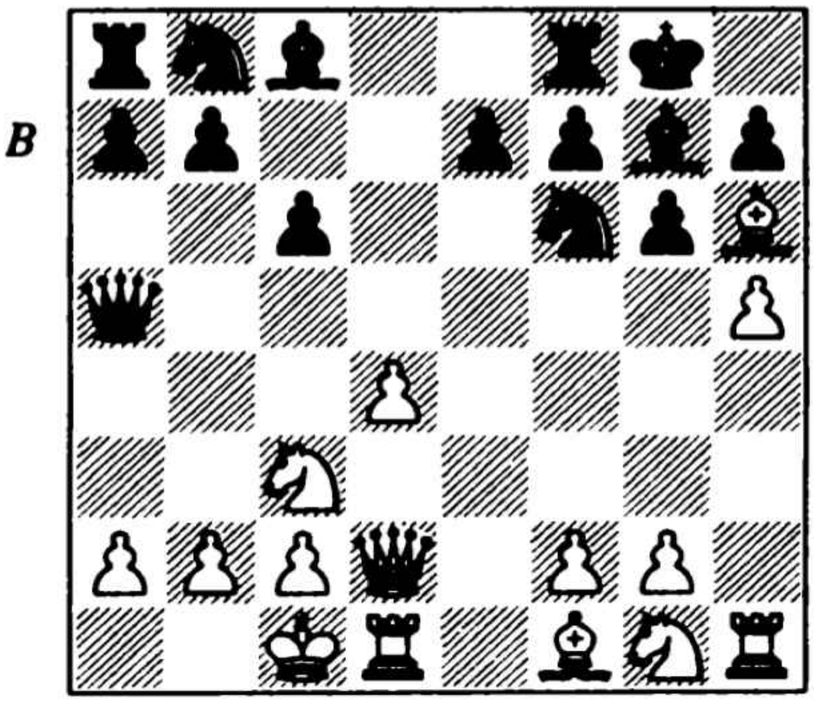
8 ♗h6 0-0?

Castling into it with a vengeance. Black should strive to castle long with 8...♗xh6 9 ♕xh6 ♗f5.

9 h4 ♕a5

10 h5! *(D)*

The attack plays itself. My experience with this line dates back to the Dragon-slaying days (see Game 2).



10 ... gxh5

Horrible, but Black must keep the h-file closed one way or another. On 10...♖d8, 11 hxg6 fxg6 12 ♗xg7 ♔xg7 13 ♕h6+ ♔g8 14 ♘f3 followed by ♘g5 is slaughter.

Or 10...♘xh5 11 ♗e2 ♘f6 12 ♗xg7 ♔xg7 13 ♕h6+ ♔g8 14 g4!

♜d8 15 g5 ♞h5 16 ♝xh5 gxh5 17 ♜xh5 ♝f5 (or 17...♛f5 18 g6! ♛xg6 19 ♜g5) 18 g6! wins.

On 10...♝f5 11 f3 (threatening g4) 11...♝xh6 (11...gxh5? 12 ♛g5 wins) 12 ♛xh6 gxh5?, 13 ♛g5+ ♚h8 14 ♝d3 wins a piece.

11 ♝d3

It's important to exclude Black's bishop from f5.

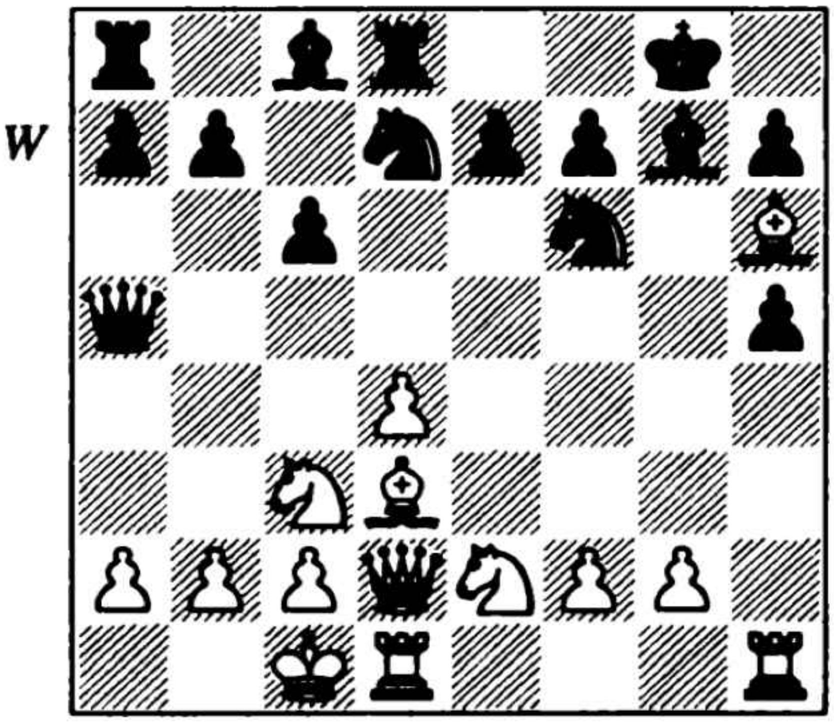
11 ... ♞bd7

Not 11...♝f5? 12 ♛g5.

12 ♞ge2

Taking advantage of the lull to bring out the reserves.

12 ... ♜d8 *(D)*



13 g4! ♞f8

On 13...♞xg4, 14 ♜dg1! (threatening both f3 and/or ♜xg4+) wins at least a piece. Black hopes to hang on by clustering minor pieces around his king.

14 gxh5

Now the open g-file becomes the new base of operations.

14 ... ♞e6

15 ♜dg1 ♚h8

Also hopeless is 15...♚f8 16 ♝xg7+ ♞xg7 17 ♛h6 ♞g4 18 ♛xh7.

16 ♝xg7+ ♞xg7

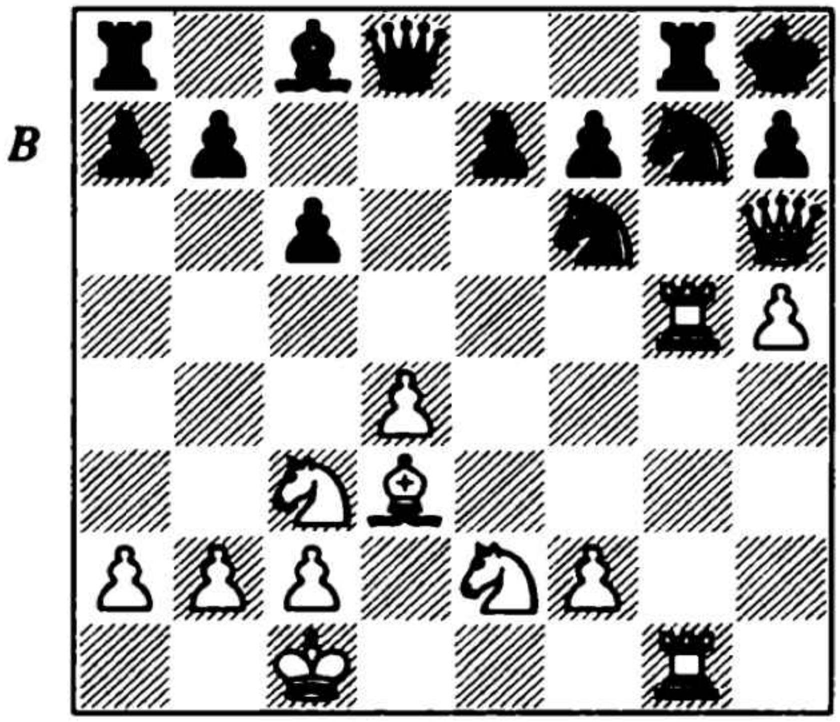
17 ♛h6 ♜g8

After 17...♞e6 18 ♞f4! White forces mate.

18 ♜g5 ♛d8

On 18...♞f5, 19 ♜xg8+ ♞xg8 20 ♛f8 followed by ♜g1 is tasty.

19 ♜hg1 *(D)*



19 ... ♞f5

Blundering a piece. But Black is completely tied up, and it's a pity he didn't allow the prettier finish after 19...♛f8 20 d5! ♝d7 (if 20...cxd5 21 ♞xd5 ♞xd5 22 ♛xh7 mate) 21 d6! ♞f5 22 ♛xf8 ♜axf8 (or 22...♜gxf8 23 ♝xf5 h6 24 dxe7 ♜fb8 25 ♜g7 ♝xf5 26 ♜xf7 etc.) 23 ♝xf5 ♜xg5 24 ♜xg5 h6 25 dxe7 ♜b8 26 ♜g3! ♝xf5 27 ♜f3 winning a piece.

20 ♝xf5 1-0

Unzicker [W.Germany] – **Fischer**

Varna OL 1962

Sicilian Defence

Playing by ear

This game illustrates the hazard of trying to rely solely on natural talent, without detailed knowledge of the latest opening innovations. Seldom is a chess master so drastically punished, as is Unzicker here, for failing to do his homework.

Disastrously pursuing a line with which Tal had just barely survived against Fischer, Unzicker blunders further through apparent unfamiliarity with Geller's improvement (15 ♔h1!). That had previously defeated Fischer at Curaçao. Unzicker simply puts his trust in 'natural moves' and drifts into a constrained position, allowing Fischer to penetrate neatly on the weakened squares. The early decision, on move 26, comes as a surprise only to Unzicker.

1 e4 c5
2 ♘f3 d6
3 d4 cxd4
4 ♘xd4 ♘f6
5 ♘c3 a6
6 ♗e2

On and off, White resorts to this solid and still respected system (championed by Smyslov) whenever the sharper tries fail.

6 ... e5

Black's expectation in this Najdorf Variation is that his control of important central squares, with possibilities of queenside expansion, will more than compensate for the slight weakness of his backward d-pawn.

7 ♘b3 ♗e6

To provoke f4-f5, weakening White's e-pawn. For the non-committal 7...♗e7 see Game 4.

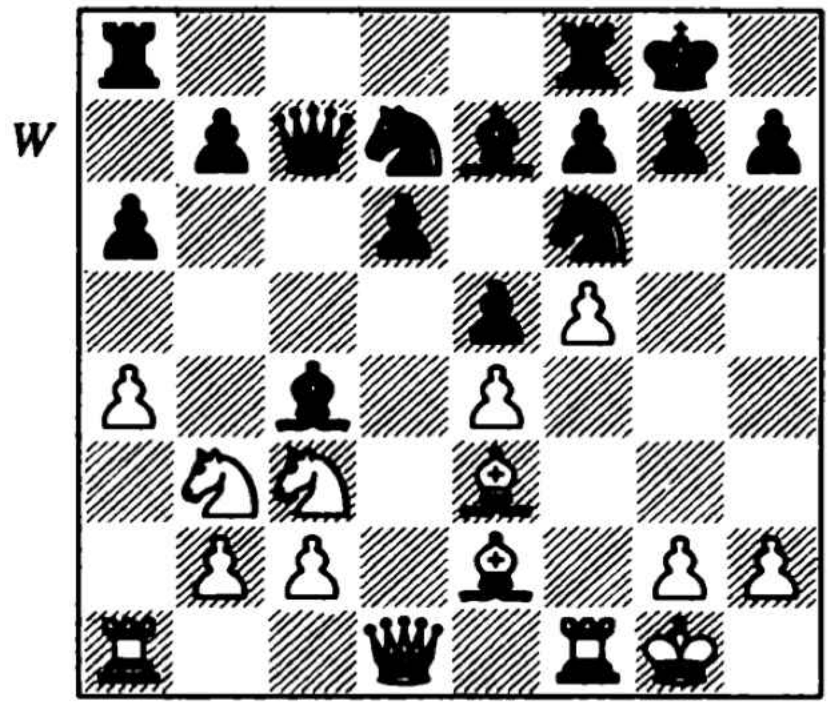
8 0-0 ♘bd7
9 f4 ♕c7
10 f5 ♗c4
11 a4

To hinder ...b5.

11 ... ♗e7

Better than 11...♖c8? 12 a5 ♗e7 13 ♗xc4 ♕xc4 14 ♖a4! ♕c7 15 ♗e3 h6 16 ♖f2 with a bind; Schmid-Evans, Varna OL 1962.

12 ♗e3 0-0 *(D)*



13 a5

A critical alternative is 13 g4 d5! 14 exd5 (if 14 g5 d4!, or 14 ♘xd5 ♘xd5 15 exd5 ♘f6 16 d6? ♗xd6 17 ♗xc4 ♕xc4 18 ♕xd6? ♕xg4+ 19 ♔h1 ♕e4+ and wins) 14...♗b4 15 g5 ♗xc3 16 gxf6 ♗xb2 17 fxg7 ♖fd8 18 ♖b1 ♗c3. White's pawns are overextended and his king is exposed.

13 ... b5

Too passive is 13...h6 14 g4 ♘h7 15 ♗f2 followed by h4.

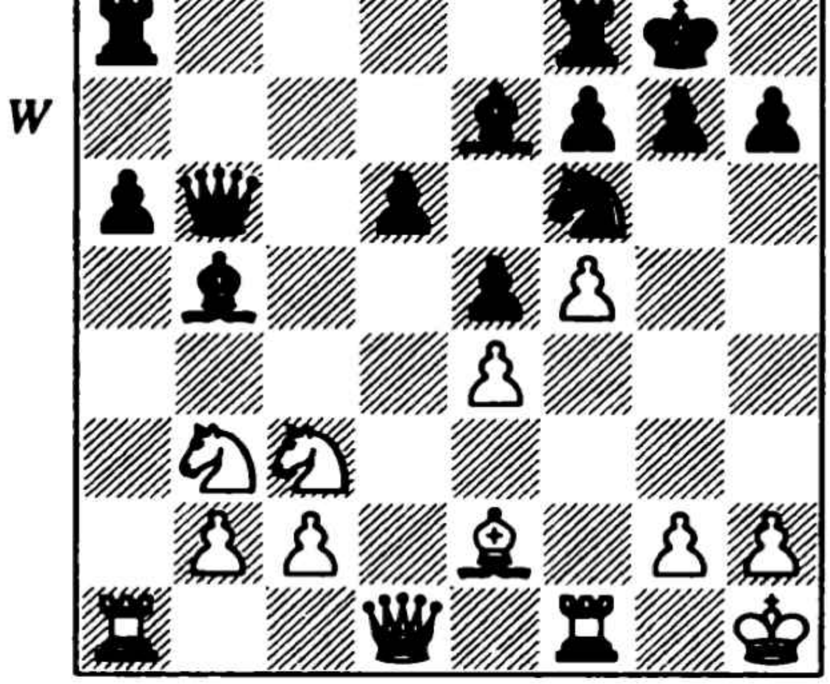
14 axb6 ♘xb6

15 ♗xb6?

At Curaçao Ct 1962, Geller had found the right line: 15 ♔h1! ♖fc8 16 ♗xb6 ♕xb6 17 ♗xc4 ♖xc4 18 ♕e2 ♖b4 19 ♖a2! and Black is hard-pressed to defend his a-pawn, but 19...h6! 20 ♖fa1 ♗f8 21 ♖xa6 ♖xa6 22 ♖xa6 ♕b7 23 ♘a5 ♕c7 24 ♘b3 ♕b7 (Zuckerman) is equal.

15 ... ♕xb6+

16 ♔h1 ♗b5! *(D)*



Intending ...♗c6 and then ...a5.

17 ♗xb5

White has already dissipated hi theoretical advantage. He should settle for 17 ♘xb5 axb5 18 ♕d3 wit opposite-coloured bishops.

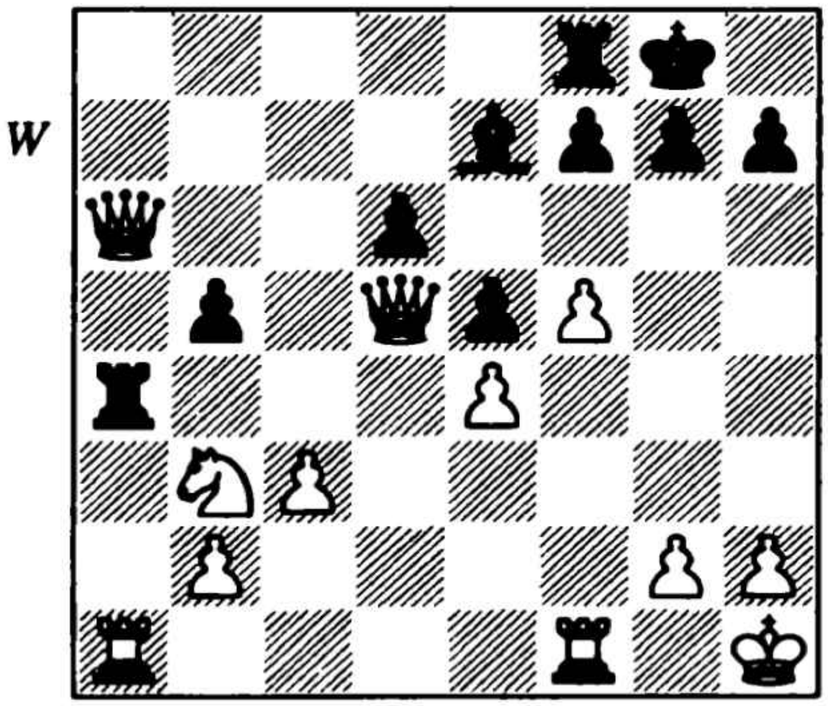
17 ... axb5

18 ♘d5 ♘xd5

19 ♕xd5 ♖a4!

Avoids conceding the a-file an puts pressure on the e-pawn.

20 c3 ♕a6 *(D)*



21 h3

It's hard for White to hit upon constructive plan. At Curaçao C

1962, Tal played against me 21 ♜ad1 ♜c8 22 ♘c1 b4 23 ♘d3!? (White's in a bad way anyhow) 23...bxc3 24 bxc3 and now 24...♜xc3 (instead of my 24...♜a5 lemon) wins outright. If 25 ♘xe5 dxe5 26 ♛xe5 (26 ♛d8+ ♗f8!), then 26...♗b4! 27 ♛xc3 ♛xf1+! (Kmoch).

21 ... ♜c8
22 ♜fe1 h6!

Some handy *luft*, as becomes apparent later.

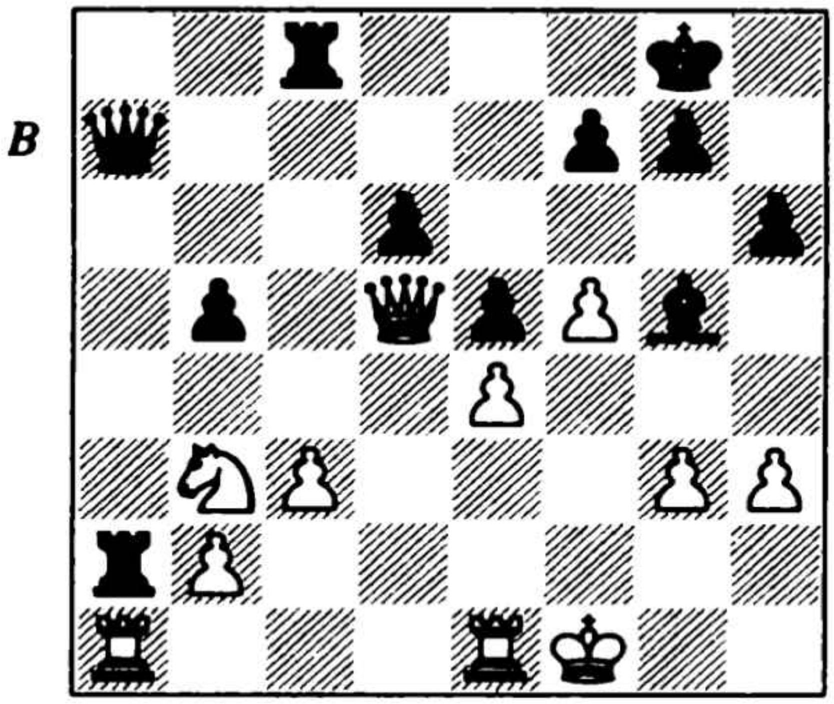
23 ♔h2 ♗g5
24 g3?

Creating more kingside weaknesses. Better is 24 ♜ad1.

24 ... ♛a7!
25 ♔g2 ♜a2
26 ♔f1 *(D)*

What else? On 26 ♜xa2 ♛xa2 27 ♜e2, there follows 27...♜xc3!.

Now Black has a decisive shot.



26 ... ♜xc3!
0-1

On 27 ♜xa2 (27 bxc3? ♛f2 mate), 27...♜f3+ 28 ♔e2 ♜f2+ 29 ♔d3 ♛xa2 30 ♜a1 ♛xb2 wins. Black's first rank is no longer vulnerable since the king can escape to h7 if White checks.

Game 43

Fischer – Reshevsky [USA]

USA Ch 1962/3

Sicilian Defence

The missing link

Many critics have dubbed this the '12th game' of the unfinished match, which had ended in a 5½-5½ tie. It is as adventurous and as bitterly contested as their earlier ones.

This time Reshevsky is well prepared for Fischer's opening, countering forcefully and equalising without difficulty. However, instead of maintaining tension, he strives inconsistently for simplifications, forcing an exchange of queens which leaves him with a strategically weak ending. Working with simultaneous threats on both wings, Fischer, despite the reduction in material, succeeds in exploiting several of his opponent's targets (backward pawns on open files). Reshevsky defends this passive position with his usual tenacity, but is unable to prevent an eventual breakthrough.

1 e4 c5
2 ♘f3 d6
3 d4 cxd4
4 ♘xd4 ♘f6
5 ♘c3 a6
6 h3 g6

A good reaction. So is 6...b5 (see Game 40).

By transposing into a Dragon Variation, Black hopes to render h3 useless, since in the normal Yugoslav Attack White will be forced to advance this pawn again, thereby losing a tempo.

7 g4 ♗g7
8 g5!?

Consistent, but perhaps premature. However, no other method offers more, e.g. 8 ♗e3 0-0 9 g5 ♘e8!, or 8 ♗g2 0-0 9 0-0 ♘c6 =.

8 ... ♘h5!

8...♘fd7 9 ♗e3 ♘c6 10 ♕d2 leaves Black slightly bottled up.

9 ♗e2 e5

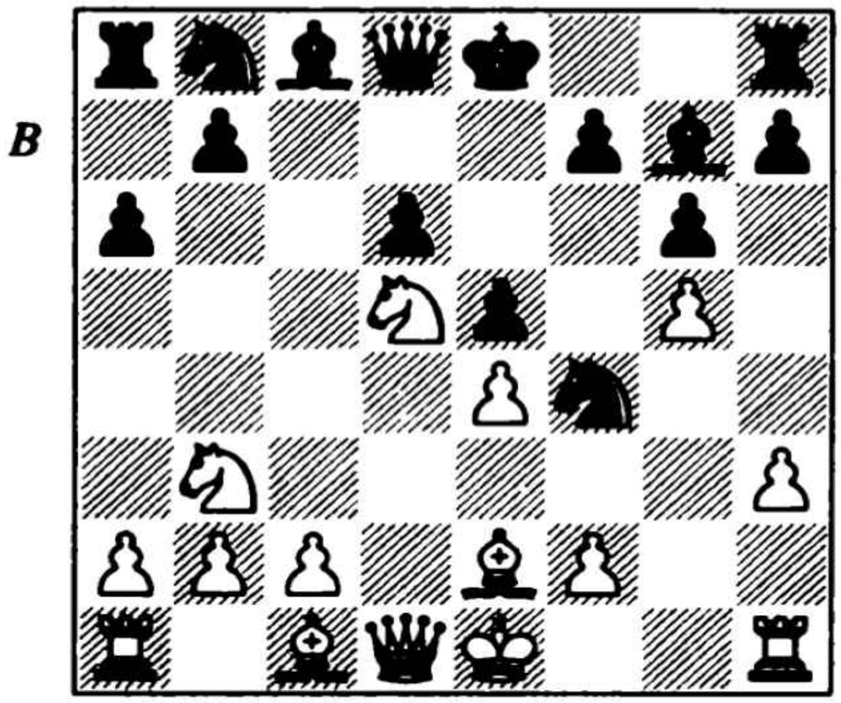
I had intended to meet 9...♘c6!? with 10 ♘b3 (and not 10 ♘xc6 bxc6 11 ♗xh5 gxh5 12 ♕xh5 ♖b8 with good compensation for the pawn).

10 ♘b3

Bad is 10 ♘f5 gxf5 11 ♗xh5 f4, shutting out White's queen's bishop.

10 ... ♘f4
11 ♘d5 *(D)*

11 ♗g4 ♘c6 12 ♘d5 might transpose to the game.



Objectively speaking, White has no opening advantage.

11 ... ♘xd5

Instead of simplifying so readily, Black could try to exploit White's weakened kingside. Tal says more 'logical' is 11...0-0 12 h4 f5 (or the interesting pawn sac 12...♘d7!? 13 ♘xf4 exf4 14 ♕xd6 ♗e5).

Another possibility is 11...♘xe2 (but not 11...♘xh3? 12 ♗e3 and the threat of ♗b6 wins material) 12 ♕xe2 ♗e6 =.

12 ♕xd5 ♘c6

Tal suggests the dubious sac 12...♗e6!? 13 ♕xb7 ♘d7 but 14 ♗e3 keeps the upper hand. But there's no need for Black to gamble. His position is basically sound.

13 ♗g4 ♗xg4

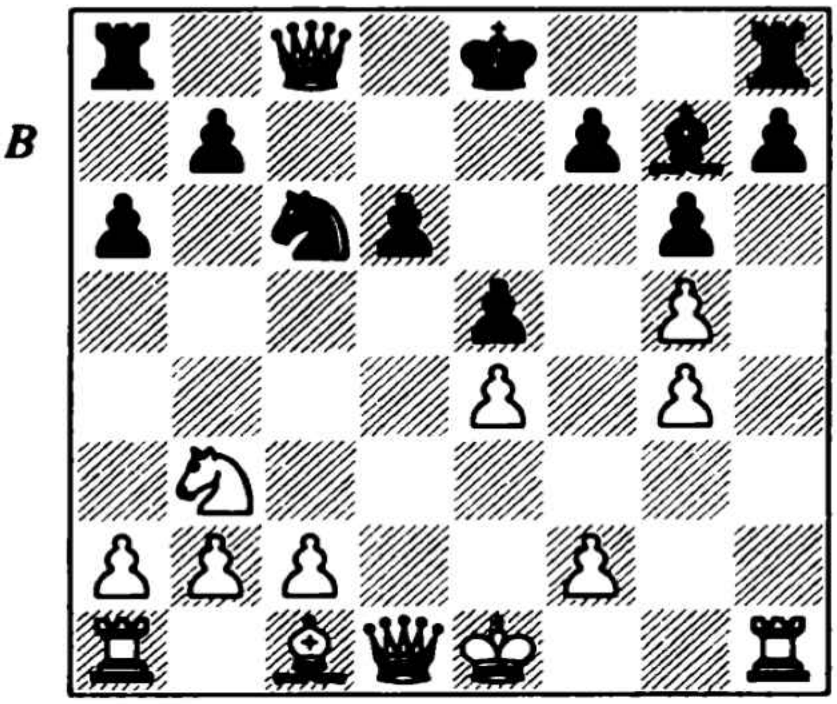
Tal gives 13...f5 14 gxf6 (14 exf5 is met by 14...♘e7! 15 ♕d3 gxf5 16 ♗h5+ ♘g6, etc.) 14...♕xf6 15 ♗xc8 ♖xc8 16 c3 ♖c7, but after 17 ♗e3 followed by 0-0-0 White stands better.

14 hxg4 ♕c8!

Creating the double threat of 15...♕xg4 and/or ...♘b4.

15 ♕d1 *(D)*

15 ♕xd6 ♕xg4 16 ♕d3 ♖d8 17 ♕e2 ♕g2 18 ♖f1 h6 allows Black to wrest the initiative.



15 ... ♘d4?

Apparently intent on simplifying at all cost, Reshevsky steers for an inferior ending. Tal gives 15...♕e6 16 ♗e3 0-0-0 =.

A Bulgarian magazine gives the sharp 15...d5!? as best, since it dissolves the backward d-pawn immediately. The tactical justification shows up after 16 exd5 (16 ♕e2 and 16 ♕f3 are both met by 16...d4) 16...♘b4 17 c3 (if 17 0-0 ♘xc2 18 ♖b1 0-0 foils White's strategy) 17...♕c4! and now there are two main lines:

a) 18 cxb4? ♕e4+ 19 ♔d2 ♖d8 20 ♔c3 ♗f8! 21 a3 (21 ♘c5 ♗xc5 22 bxc5 ♖xd5 wins for Black) 21...♖c8+ 22 ♔d2 (not 22 ♘c5? ♗xc5 23 bxc5 ♖xc5+ 24 ♔b3 ♕c4 mate) 22...♗e7! with a continuing attack.

b) 18 ♖h3 ♘xd5 (18...♕e4+ 19 ♔f1 ♘c2? loses to 20 ♘d2) 19 ♕e2 ♕c7 =.

16 c3 ♘xb3

17 axb3 ♕e6

18 ♖a5! f6?

Leads to a lifeless ending. Better chances are offered by 18...0-0 (or 18...b5 19 ♕d5 ♕xd5 20 exd5 ♔d7) 19 ♖d5 ♖ad8 followed by ...f5.

19 ♕d5! ♕xd5

Not 19...♕xg4? 20 ♕xb7 0-0 21 gxf6.

20 ♖xd5 ♔d7

21 gxf6 ♗xf6

22 g5 ♗e7

23 ♔e2

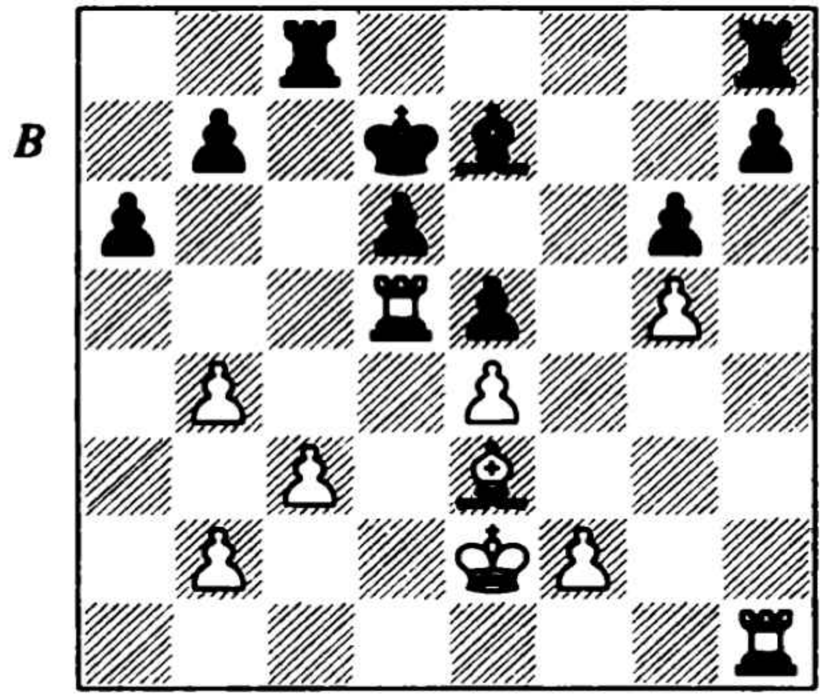
Now it's clear that Black's game is, at best, barely tenable. Both his d-pawn and h-pawn are ugly weaknesses exposed on open files.

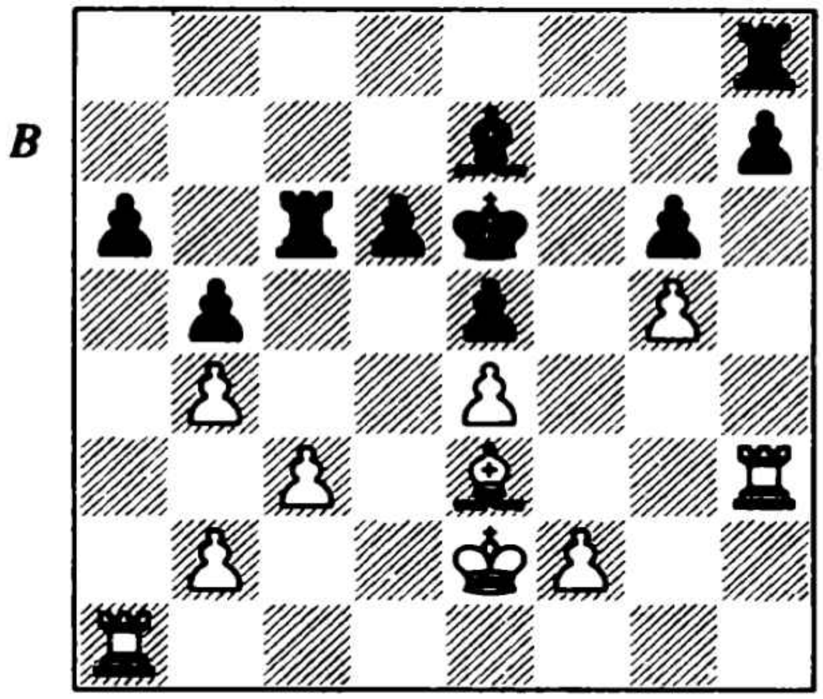
23 ... ♖af8

24 ♗e3 ♖c8

25 b4 *(D)*

More accurate possibly is 25 c4 ♔c7 26 b4 and Black has constantly to worry about breaks with c5, b5 or even f4.





25 ... b5!?

Many annotators criticised this because it creates a fresh weakness (the a-pawn). But if Black just waits he ultimately should get squeezed to death after ♔d3 followed by c4, etc. Reshevsky apparently feels more comfortable living with his new weaknesses, rather than with the uncertainties which would be created after an eventual c4.

26 ♖dd1

White cannot keep d5 under control indefinitely. In order to make progress, the rooks must strike at the backward a- and h-pawns.

26 ... ♔e6

27 ♖a1 ♖c6

28 ♖h3 *(D)*

28 ♖h4? allows 28...h5!, eliminating the weakness.

28 ... ♗f8

28...d5!? loses a pawn but offers a slight ray of hope; e.g. 29 exd5+ ♔xd5 30 ♖ah1 ♔c4 31 ♖xh7 ♖xh7 32 ♖xh7 ♖e6 33 ♔d2 (33 ♔f3? e4+! 34 ♔f4 ♔b3) 33...♔b3 34 ♔d3 ♔xb2 35 ♔e4! ♗f8 (35...♔xc3 36 ♔d5 ♖d6+ 37 ♔xe5 ♗f8 loses a piece to 38 ♖c7+! ♔b3 39 ♖c8 ♗e7 40 ♖e8 ♖d7 41 ♔e6) 36 ♖h8 ♗g7 37 ♖g8 ♖e7 38 ♖c8! followed by ♖c6 should win.

29 ♖ah1 ♖c7

Now 29...d5? fails to 30 exd5+ ♔xd5 31 ♖xh7 ♖xh7 32 ♖xh7 ♔c4 33 ♖f7 ♖c8 34 ♖f6 ♔b3 35 ♖xa6 ♔xb2 36 ♗d2, etc.

30 ♖h4!

The critical position. Black is virtually in zugzwang. The rook on h4 serves a valuable function, as will become apparent.

30 ... d5

After 30...♖c4 (30...♖f7 31 ♖a1) 31 f3 ♖c7, White should win with 32 ♔f2! d5 33 ♖a1 ♖c6 34 exd5+ ♔xd5 35 ♖d1+ ♔e6 36 ♖d8.

31 ♖a1!

Reshevsky doubtless underestimated this interpolation. He probably expected 31 exd5+ ♔xd5 32 ♖d1+ ♔e6 33 ♖d8 ♗g7!.

31 ... ♖c6

31...dxe4 loses to 32 ♖xa6+ ♔d5 33 ♖b6.

32 exd5+ ♔xd5

33 ♖d1+ ♔e6

The merit of the rook on h4 is that it prevents the king from entering at c4.

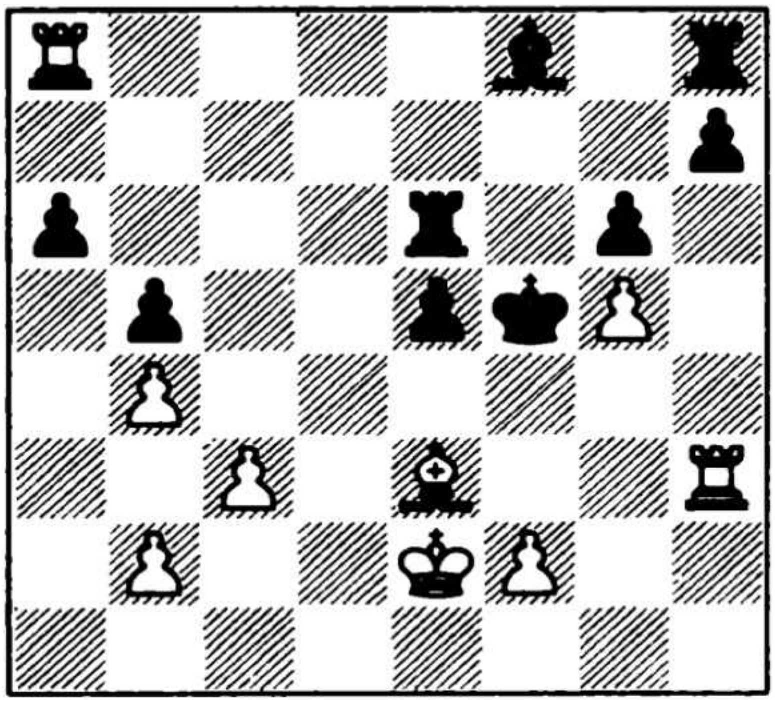
34 ♖d8 ♔f5

With Black's rook on c6 (instead of c7, as before) he no longer has the reply ...♗g7. And 34...♖c7 is decisively met by 35 ♖a8.

35 ♖a8 ♖e6

36 ♖h3! *(D)*

B



36 ... ♗g7

Just as bad is 36...♔g4 37 ♖g3+ ♔h5 38 ♖f3 ♗g7 39 ♖xh8 ♗xh8 40 ♖f8 ♗g7 41 ♖f7. Or 36...♔e4 37 ♖f3 ♗g7 38 ♖xh8 ♗xh8 39 ♖f8 ♗g7 40 ♖f7 ♗h8 41 f3+ ♔d5 42 ♖xh7 ♖e8 43 ♔d3.

37 ♖xh8 ♗xh8

38 ♖xh7 ♖e8

39 ♖f7+ ♔g4

Or 39...♔e4 40 f3+ ♔d5 41 ♔d3 winning.

40 f3+ ♔g3

41 ♔d3?

A buzz began to circulate in the playing hall and I wondered what it was all about. Later they told me 41 ♔f1! (threatening ♗f2+) forces at least the win of a piece. Of course the text move also wins, but it takes ten moves longer.

41 ... e4+

Throwing another pawn to the winds in order to get the bishop into play. 41...♖c8 42 ♗c5 is also easy.

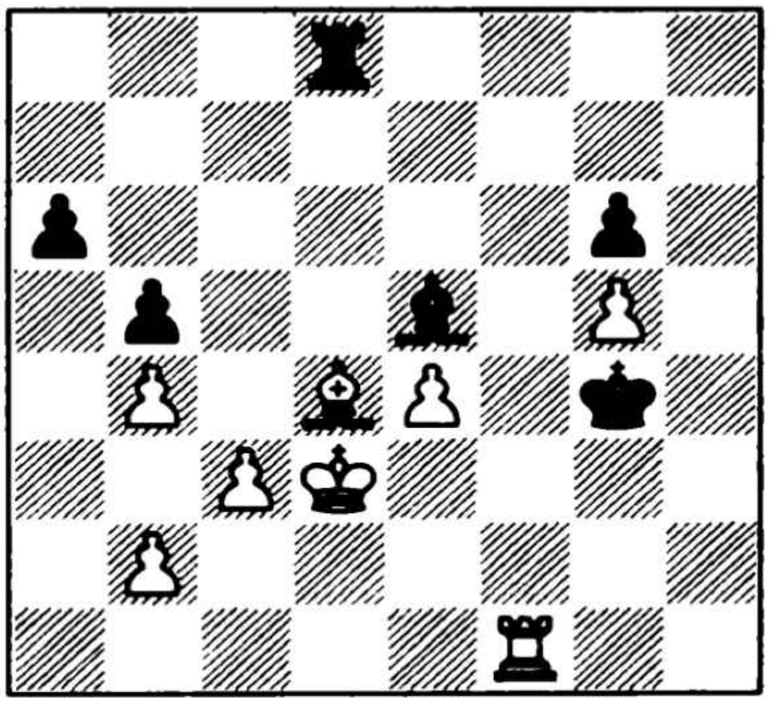
42 fxe4 ♖d8+

43 ♗d4 ♔g4

44 ♖f1 ♗e5 *(D)*

If 44...♔xg5, then 45 ♖g1+ ♔f4 46 ♖xg6.

W



45 ♔e3 ♗c7

After 45...♗xd4+ 46 cxd4 ♔xg5 47 e5 the centre pawns are irresistible.

46 ♖g1+ ♔h4

47 ♔f3 ♖d7

Or 47...♖f8+ 48 ♗f6 ♔h3 49 ♖h1+ ♗h2 50 e5 ♖e8! 51 ♔e4, etc.

The rest is silence.

48 e5 ♖f7+
49 ♔e4 ♖f5
50 e6 ♗d8
51 ♗f6! ♗xf6
52 gxf6 ♖xf6
53 ♔d5 ♖f2
54 ♖e1 1-0

Game 44

Fischer – Fine [USA]

New York 1963: Skittles Game

Evans Gambit

Shock treatment

Having become one of the leading players in the world, Fine quit chess at the height of his career (1945) to become a practising psychoanalyst, but he has lost none of his love for the game and little of his brilliance. The following is one of seven or eight offhand games played at his home in New York. As far as can be ascertained, Dr. Fine very nearly held his own.

Here, departing for the first time from his beloved Ruy Lopez, Fischer employs the daring gambit introduced by Captain Evans a century ago. This ploy has all but disappeared from the arena. Fine, although the author of several opening manuals, is understandably rusty, and he gets caught in a vice from which he never escapes. Fischer uncorks a sparkling finish in seventeen moves.

1 e4 e5
2 ♘f3 ♘c6
3 ♗c4 ♗c5
4 b4!? ♗xb4

4...♗b6 is safer, but that is hardly the way to refute the gambit.

5 c3 ♗a5

For the alternative 5...♗e7, see Game 50.

6 d4 exd4

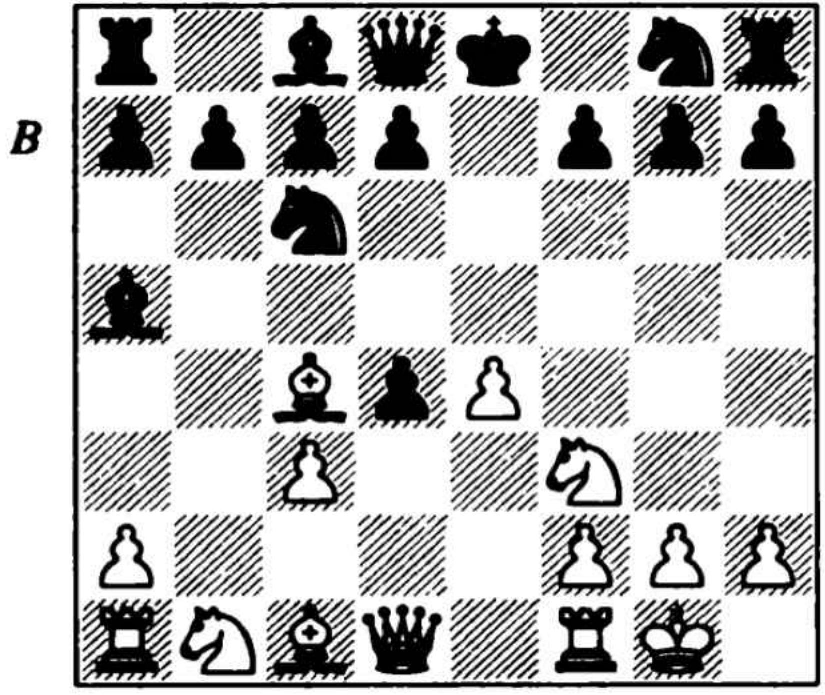
6...d6 7 0-0 (7 ♕b3 is a better move) 7...♗b6 is the famous Lasker Defence, which put the Evans out of commission last century.

7 0-0 *(D)*

7 ... dxc3

"A little too greedy." (*MCO*, 10th Ed.)

7...♗b6 8 cxd4 d6 leads to the so-called 'Normal Variation', which is tenable. After 7...d6 8 ♕b3 (Walter's Attack) someone played 8...♕d7 against me at an exhibition (Davis College 1964); 9 cxd4 ♗b6 10 ♗b5

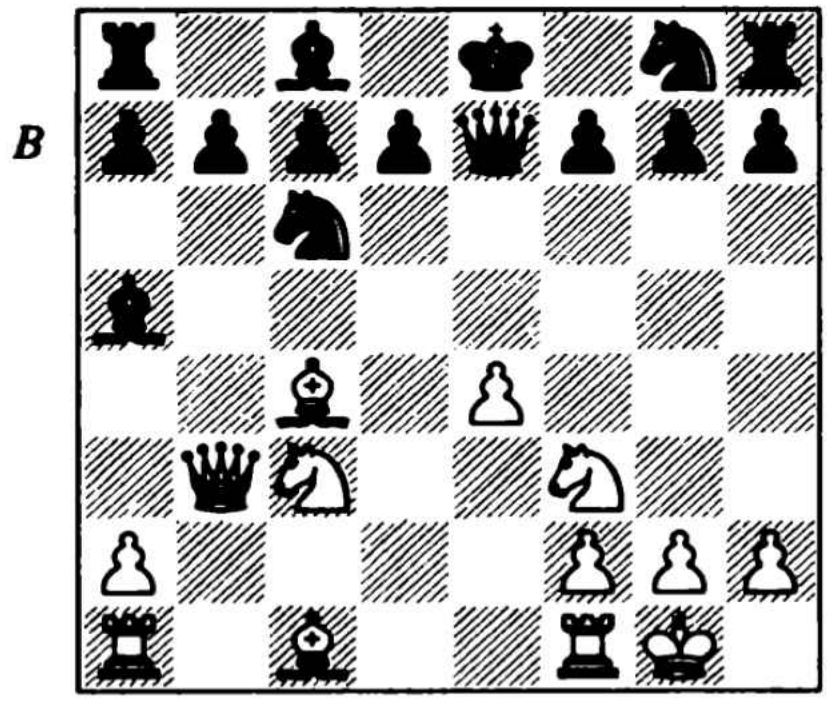


♔f8! 11 d5 ♘a5 and Black saves the piece.

8 ♕b3 ♕e7

More usual is 8...♕f6 9 e5 ♕g6 10 ♘xc3 ♘ge7 and now either 11 ♘e2 or 11 ♗a3 leads to complicated positions which Chigorin, for example, thought were playable for Black.

9 ♘xc3 *(D)*



9 ... ♘f6?

On 9...♗xc3, 10 ♕xc3 f6 (if 10...♘f6, 11 ♗a3 d6 12 e5 ♘e4 13 ♕b2 and against 13...♘xe5, 14 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 15 ♖fe1! wins a piece) 11 ♗a3 d6 12 ♗d5! ♗d7 13 ♖ab1 0-0-0 14 ♘d4 is crushing.

The best defence follows an old analysis from Freeborough and Rankin (1893): 9...♕b4! 10 ♗xf7+ ♔d8 11 ♗g5+ (11 ♗xg8? ♕xb3! holds) 11...♘ge7 12 ♘d5 ♕xb3 13 axb3 ♗b6 (13...♗b4! looks better) 14 ♖fc1 h6 15 ♖xc6 hxg5 16 ♘xb6 cxb6 17 ♖xb6, etc.

10 ♘d5! ♘xd5

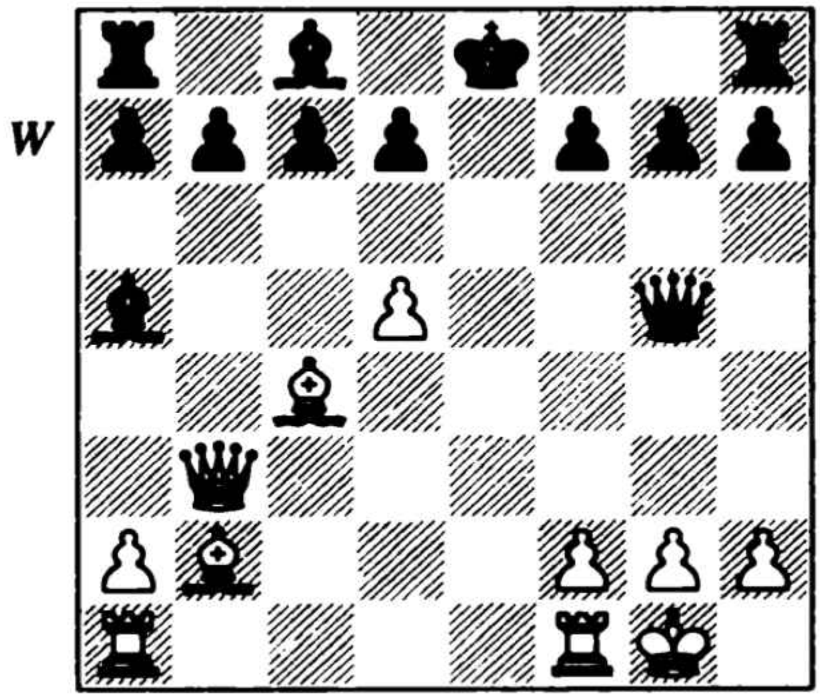
10...♕xe4 is necessary , but even in this case 11 ♘g5 produces a violent attack.

11 exd5 ♘e5

On 11...♘d8, 12 ♗a3 is decisive (12...d6 13 ♕b5+).

12 ♘xe5 ♕xe5

13 ♗b2 ♕g5 *(D)*



14 h4!

Deflecting Black's 'overloaded' queen.

14 ... ♕xh4

On 14...♕h6, 15 ♕a3 (threatening ♖fe1+) wins. Or 14...♕g4 15 ♖fe1+ ♗xe1 (if 15...♔d8, 16 ♕e3

♗b4 17 ♕h6!! gxh6 18 ♗f6+ ♗e7 19 ♗xe7+ ♔e8 20 ♗g5+! ♔f8 21 ♗xh6+ ♕g7 22 ♖e8+!! ♔xe8 23 ♗xg7 wins) 16 ♖xe1+ ♔d8 17 ♕e3 ♕xh4 18 g3! and Black's queen must relinquish its guard of e7.

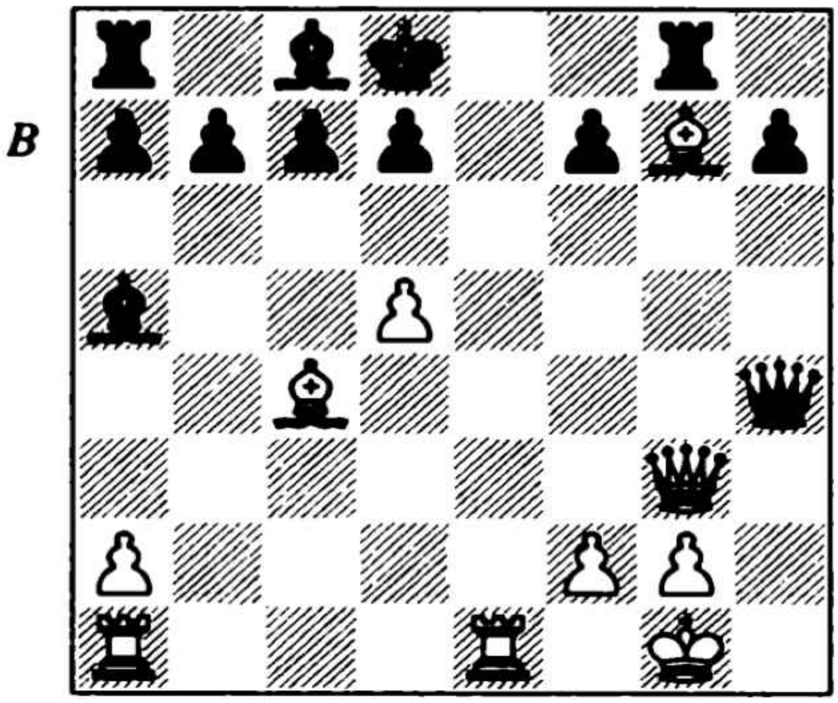
15 ♗xg7 ♖g8

16 ♖fe1+ ♔d8

16...♗xe1 17 ♖xe1+ leads to the same finale.

17 ♕g3! *(D)* **1-0**

In view of 17...♕xg3 18 ♗f6 mate.



Game 45

Fischer – Bisguier [USA]

New York State Open Ch 1963

Two Knights' Defence

Ghosts

Steinitz, nicknamed 'the Austrian Morphy' (although two styles could hardly be more dissimilar) apparently exercises a great influence on Fischer, who has restored several of his pet lines to prominence. One of these is the bizarre 9 ♘h3!?, found wanting at the turn of the century, and perhaps best left there.

Bisguier appears unimpressed, regaining his gambit pawn with a strong initiative. But he misses several opportunities to gain an advantage and is gradually outplayed. Just at the critical moment, when the chances are roughly equal, he commits the same kind of gross oversight that had doomed Fischer against Spassky (Game 18). He suffers the same fate.

1 e4

Best by test.

1 ... e5

2 ♘f3 ♘c6

3 ♗c4

The last time I played this move in a tournament was when I was 12, at the 1955 US Junior Ch.

3 ... ♘f6!?

Steinitz considered this to be an unsound sacrificial continuation!

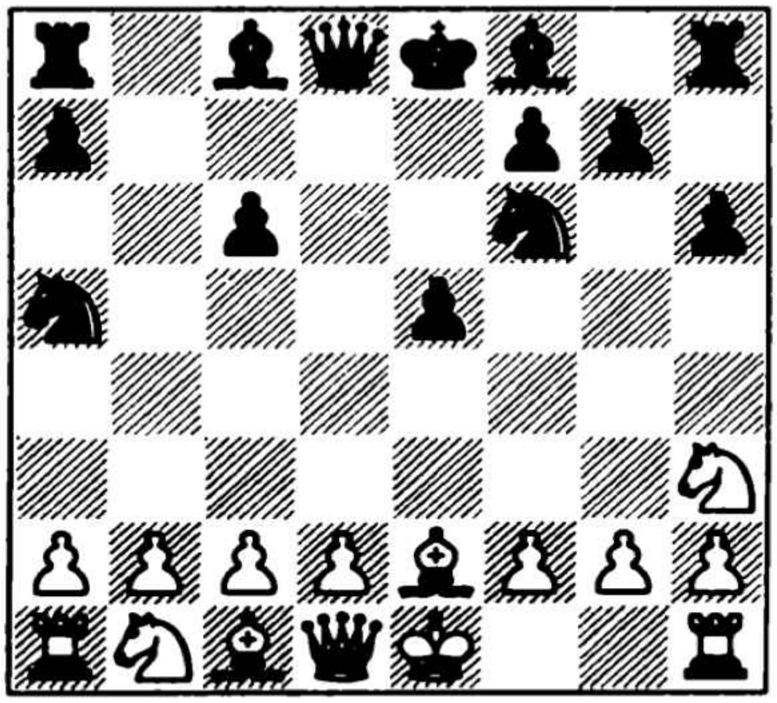
4 ♘g5

Tarrasch branded this a 'duffer's move' and Panov called it 'primitive'. But there is no other way for White to try for an advantage. 4 d3 is tame. And after 4 0-0 ♘xe4 5 ♘c3 ♘xc3 6 dxc3 ♕e7! White has no compensation for the pawn. Finally, 4 d4 leads to the Max Lange Attack.

4 ... d5
5 exd5 ♘a5

5...♘d4!? (Fritz) and 5...b5!? (Ulvestad) are both interesting but unsound. On 5...♘xd5, 6 d4! (6 ♘xf7!? is the 'Fried Liver Attack') is so strong that 5...♘xd5 is practically extinct.

6 ♗b5+ c6
7 dxc6 bxc6
8 ♗e2 h6
9 ♘h3!? *(D)*



To my knowledge, this is the first time that this move had been employed in grandmaster chess for over seventy years. It is one of Steinitz's many unique opening contributions. The famous cable match game in 1891 between Steinitz and Chigorin, which ended in a victory for Black, apparently caused the chess world to shy away from this variation.

9 ... ♗c5

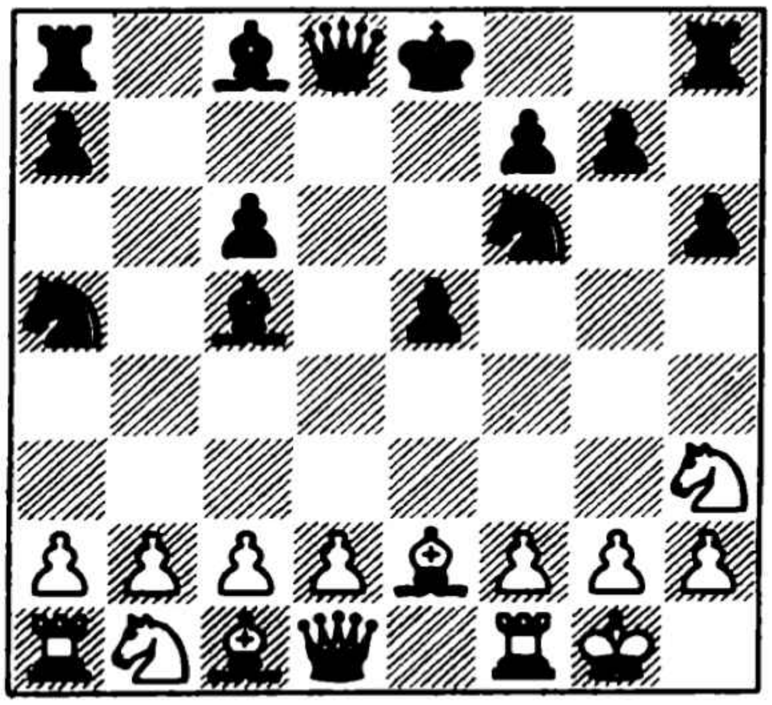
a) 9...♗d6 (Steinitz) might be worth investigating. If 10 d4 (Chigorin) then 10...e4 (Fischer).

b) 9...♗f5 is too crude: 10 0-0 ♕d7 11 ♖e1 ♗xh3 12 gxh3 ♕xh3 13 ♗f1 and Black is busted, e.g. 13...♕g4+? 14 ♕xg4 ♘xg4 15 h3 wins a piece (Steinitz).

c) 9...g5 10 d3 g4 11 ♘g1 ♗c5 12 ♘c3 effectively wards off the threats (12...♕b6 is answered by 13 ♘a4!).

10 0-0 *(D)*

Played by Steinitz in the 6th game of his second match with Chigorin in 1892. Better is 10 d3! 0-0 11 ♘c3 ♖e8 12 0-0 ♗xh3 13 gxh3 ♕d7 14 ♗g4 ♘xg4 15 hxg4, etc., as I played against Radoičić here in a later round.



10 ... 0-0

Dr. Gottschall, in the 1892 *Deutsche Schachzeitung*, suggests 10...g5, remarking it strange that a player as aggressive as Chigorin did not chance it. Gottschall gives 11 ♔h1 g4 12 ♘g1 ♘e4 13 ♗xg4! ♘xf2+ 14 ♖xf2 ♗xf2 and, although Black has won the exchange, prefers White's practical chances.

After 10...g5 11 ♔h1 g4 12 ♘g1 ♘e4 let us suppose White tries to avert material loss with 13 b4 (of no avail is 13 ♕e1 ♕d4 14 ♗d1 ♘xf2+ 15 ♖xf2 ♕xf2 16 ♕xe5+? ♗e6) 13...♘xf2+ (or Gottschall's 13...♗xf2 14 d3 ♕h4 15 dxe4 ♗g3 16 ♘h3 [16 h3 gxh3 17 gxh3 ♖g8] 16...♗xh2! 17 ♔xh2 g3+ 18 ♔g1 ♗xh3, etc.) 14 ♖xf2 ♗xf2 15 bxa5 ♕h4! 16 ♕f1 ♗g3 17 h3 ♖g8 with a crushing attack.

11 d3 ♗xh3

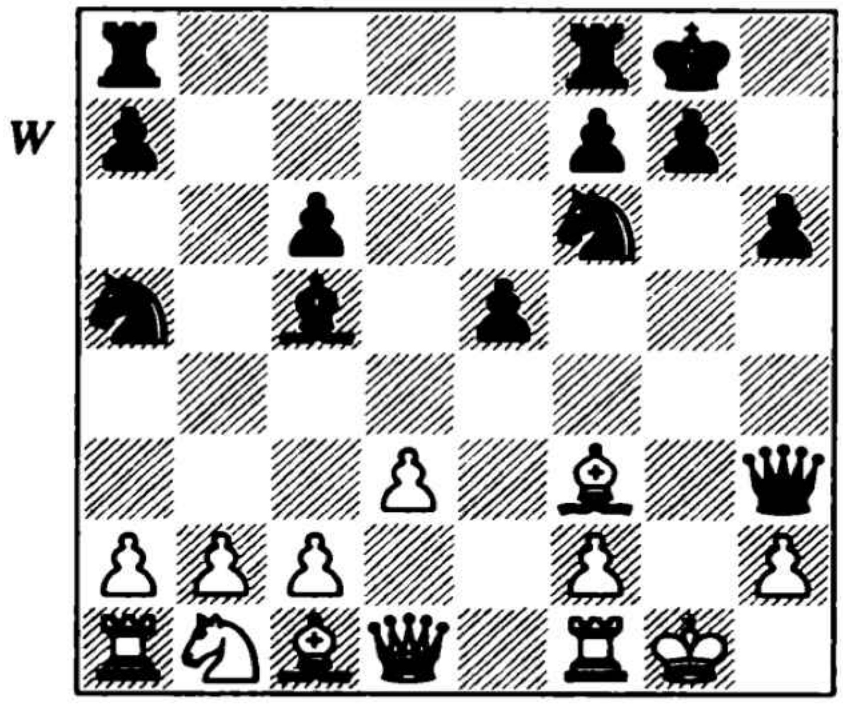
This seems an improvement over the Steinitz-Chigorin game mentioned in the note to White's 10th, which continued: 11...♘d5 (Gottschall's 11...♘h7 merits attention) 12 c4 ♘e7 13 ♔h1 ♗xh3 14 gxh3 ♘f5 15 f4 exf4 16 ♗xf4 ♘e3 17 ♗xe3 ♗xe3 18 ♘c3 and White won easily with his queenside majority.

12 gxh3 ♕d7

13 ♗f3

A difficult choice. I rejected 13 ♔g2 since this was the square I had reserved for my bishop. 13 ♗g4 ♘xg4 followed by ...f5 gives Black fair attacking chances.

13 ... ♕xh3 *(D)*



So Black regains the sacrificed pawn, but I have faith in my two bishops.

14 ♘d2

It would be a mistake to play for the win of a pawn by 14 ♗g2 ♕h4! 15 ♕e1 ♖fe8!! 16 ♕xa5 ♘g4 17 h3 ♗xf2+ 18 ♖xf2 (or 18 ♔h1 ♕g3) 18...♕xf2+ 19 ♔h1 e4! 20 hxg4 (if 20 dxe4 ♖xe4) 20...exd3 with a winning attack.

14 ... ♖ad8

Not 14...e4? 15 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 16 ♗xe4 ♗d6 17 f4, etc.

15 ♗g2 ♕f5

The queen is forced off the h-file. On 15...♕h4?, 16 ♘f3 ♕h5 17 ♕e1 wins a pawn.

16 ♕e1

Perhaps 16 ♕f3 is better, with possibilities of a slightly favourable ending.

16 ... ♖fe8

17 ♘e4 ♗b6

18 ♘xf6+

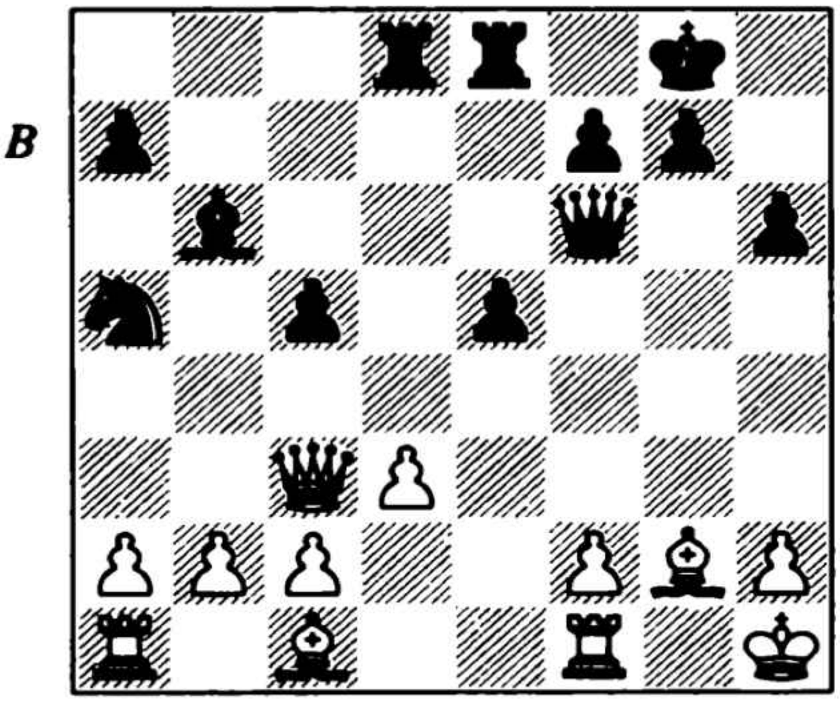
I was worried about the manoeuvre ...♘d5-f4. But sharper is 18 b4 ♘b7 19 b5.

18 ... ♛xf6
19 ♔h1 c5

A stronger line is 19...g5, preventing White's break on f4 once and for all. Then by bringing his knight to h4 Black could get a good game.

20 ♛c3! *(D)*

Serves the double purpose of preventing ...c4 and of enforcing f4. For all the good it does, Black's bishop on b6 might just as well be a pawn for the rest of the game.



20 ... ♘c6

20...g5? is too late in view of 21 f4!.

21 f4 ♘d4
22 ♛c4

To prepare c3, driving the knight away from d4. I didn't like the looks of 22 fxe5 ♛xe5 23 ♗f4 ♛e2, etc.

22 ... ♛g6

Intending ...♛h5 to be followed by ...♘f5. (But not 23...♛e6 24 ♛a4 ♛d7? 25 ♛xd7 ♜xd7 26 c3 ♘c2 26 ♗c6!.)

23 c3

After the game a kibitzer suggested 23 ♗e4 ♛h5 24 f5 but this allows Black to turn the tables by 24...♛e2 25 ♜g1 ♘f3!.

23 ... ♘f5

On 23...♘e2, 24 f5 ♛f6 (not 24...♛h5? 25 ♗f3!) 25 ♗e3 ♘f4 26 ♗e4 is tremendous.

24 fxe5

After 22 ♗e4 ♛h5 just who has got the attack is not quite clear!

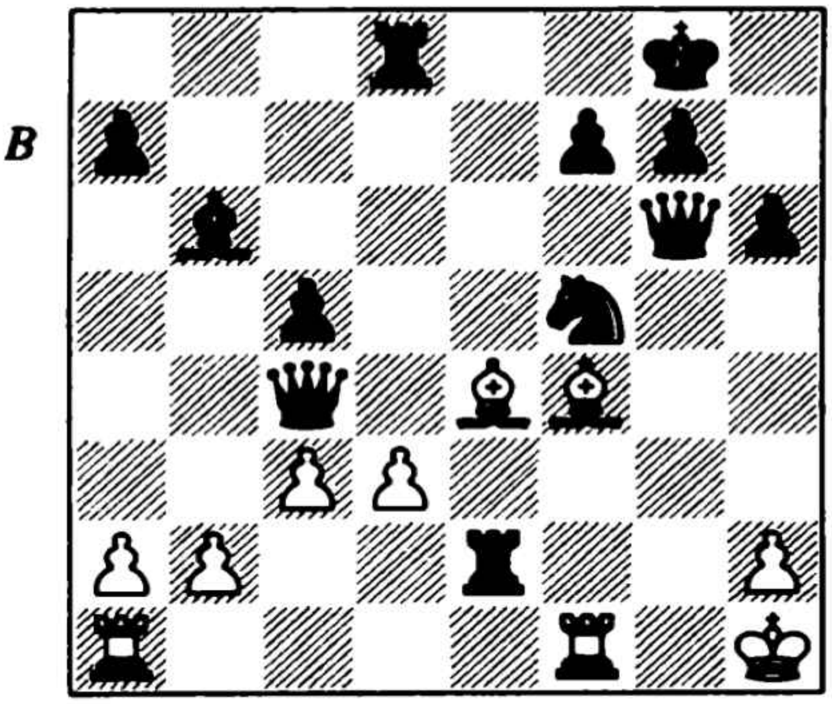
24 ... ♜xe5
25 ♗f4

25 ♛f4 turns out badly for White after the response 25...♗c7! 26 ♗e4 ♛h5!.

25 ... ♜e2

Black is playing for an advantage. 25...♘e3 26 ♗xe3 ♜xe3 is absolutely equal.

26 ♗e4 *(D)*



The critical position.

26 ... ♜xb2?

A pity that just when the game was getting interesting, Black had to make this terrible mistake.

26...♖e8! is correct, threatening ...♖8xe4. Then 27 ♖g1 ♕h5 28 ♖af1 would be bad due to 28...♘e3! 29 ♕b5 ♖xe4 30 dxe4 ♘xf1 31 ♕e8+ (31 ♖xf1 fails to 31...♕g4) 31...♔h7 32 ♖xg7+ ♔xg7 33 ♗e5+ ♕xe5 34 ♕xe5+ f6 35 ♕e7+ ♔g6 36 ♕e8+ ♔g5 when Black escapes the perpetual and should win.

Therefore after 26...♖e8!, the best White has is 27 ♗f3 (in order to prevent ...♕h5) 27...♖xb2 28 ♖ae1 with even chances, owing to the bishop pair.

27 ♗e5!

Bisguier slumped and his chest collapsed, as he saw that Black cannot avert the loss of a piece.

27 ... ♖e8
28 ♖xf5 ♖xe5
29 ♖xe5 1-0

Game 46

Fischer – Benko [USA]

USA Ch 1963/4

Pirc Defence

Romp

Chess Life, January 1964, reported:

"In the later stages of the tournament some of Fischer's opponents did almost as much to guarantee his 11-0 score as Bobby did. The building tension worked to Fischer's advantage... On Monday, December 30, Fischer won his last game of 1963—defeating Pal Benko with a neat little combination, after Benko had shown some suicidal tendencies in the management of his defence."

And so, in twenty-one moves, another grandmaster is demolished. Benko misses a chance to simplify (on move 15) in order to reach an inferior but possibly tenable ending. This is fortunate for the reader, who otherwise would be cheated of White's scintillating 19th move. That alone is worth the price of admission!

1 e4 g6
2 d4 ♗g7

3 c4 d6 4 ♘c3 transposes to a King's Indian after 4...♘f6. 3 h4!? is

4 f4

Sharpest. Another build-up is 4 ♗e3 ♘f6 5 f3, etc.

4 ... ♘f6

5 ♘f3 0-0

6 ♗d3

An improvement over 6 ♗e2 which I played against Korchnoi at Curaçao Ct 1962. That game continued 6...c5 7 dxc5 ♕a5 8 0-0 ♕xc5+ 9 ♔h1 ♘c6 10 ♘d2 a5! 11 ♘b3 ♕b6 12 a4 ♘b4 13 g4 ♗xg4! with a big advantage.

6 ... ♗g4?

Preparing to sac the 'minor exchange'. Interesting is Valvo's idea 6...♘a6!? 7 e5 dxe5 8 fxe5 ♘d5 9 ♘xd5 ♕xd5 which was about equal in Bisguier-Benko, match 1964.

The book gives 6...♘bd7 7 0-0 (7 e5 is best) 7...e5 8 dxe5 dxe5 9 fxe5 ♘xe5 10 ♘xe5 ♕d4+ 11 ♔h1 ♕xe5 12 ♗f4 ♕c5 with a tenable game.

Fischer-Perez, Havana 1965 continued 6...♘c6!? 7 e5 dxe5 8 fxe5 ♘d5 (Spassky's 8...♘g4 or maybe even 8...♘h5 is better) 9 ♘xd5 ♕xd5 10 c3 ♗g4 11 ♕e2! with a pull.

7 h3 ♗xf3

8 ♕xf3

I overheard someone explaining this game to a beginner: "You take off the knight here, another piece comes out to replace it, so Black hasn't really stopped White's development..."

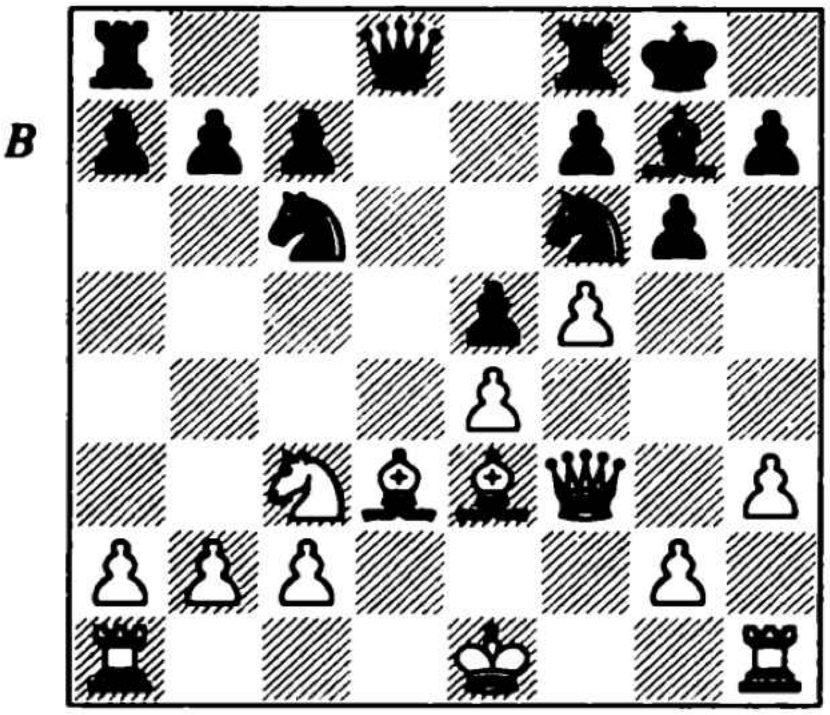
9 ♗e3 e5

On 9...♘d7, 10 e5 keeps Black cramped.

10 dxe5 dxe5

11 f5 *(D)*

Already threatening to obtain a winning bind with g4-g5.



11 ... gxf5

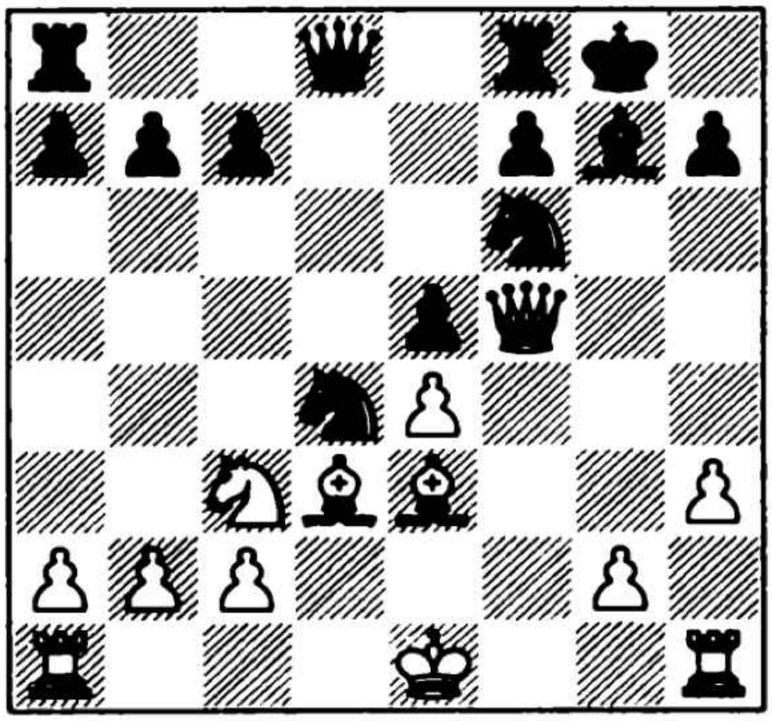
Best. My original note said: "If immediately 11...♘d4, 12 ♕f2 gxf5 13 exf5 with a quick crush in sight." This verdict was later confirmed in the game Bednarski-Kraidman, Tel Aviv 1964, which continued: 13...b5 14 0-0 c5 15 ♘e4 c4 16 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 17 ♗e4 ♖ad8 18 c3 ♖fe8 19 ♔h1 ♔h8 20 ♖ae1 b4 21 cxd4 exd4 22 ♗c1 d3 23 b3 ♗h6 24 ♗xh6 ♕xh6 25 ♗f3 ♖xe1 26 ♕xe1 c3 27 ♕e7! and White won in ten more moves.

12 ♕xf5

After 12 exf5 e4! Black gets good counterplay.

12 ... ♘d4 *(D)*

Benko is willing to gamble a pawn to drive White's queen from its dominating post. 12...♕d7 is safer, however.



13 ♕f2

I was tempted to accept the dare with 13 ♕xe5! ♘g4 14 ♕xg7+! ♔xg7 15 hxg4 with threats all over the place. For example, if 15...♘e6, 16 e5 ♖h8 17 ♗h6+ ♔g8 18 ♘e4 wins, but 15...♘c6 is hard to crack.

13 ... ♘e8

More active than the continuation 13...♘d7 14 0-0-0 ♘c5 15 ♔b1 followed by ♘e2 and c3 driving out the knight. Now with ...♘d6 pending, Black threatens either to break with ...f5 or, in some lines, to advance with ...c5-c4.

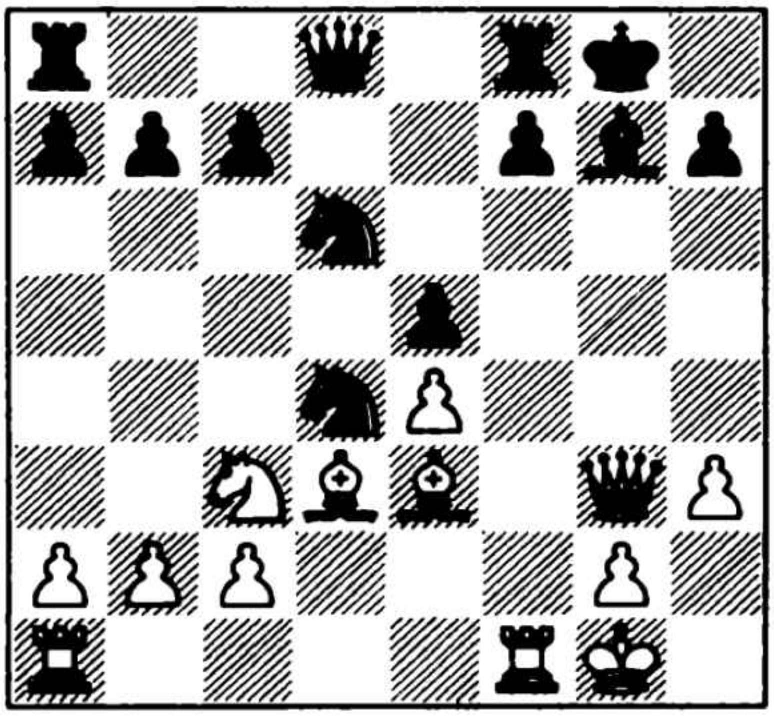
14 0-0

An alternative is 14 0-0-0 ♘d6 15 ♘e2. I thought White's king would be safer after the text—the drawback is the kingside pawns can no longer safely advance.

Sharp! I had expected 14...c6 15 ♘e2 after which Black must either exchange his only well-placed piece or allow White's knight to scramble to g3 and then h5 or f5.

15 ♕g3 *(D)*

The only way to sustain the initiative. On 15 ♘d5 f5 16 ♗xd4 ♘xe4! 17 ♗xe4 fxe4, Black wins a pawn. And 15 ♘e2 f5 gives Black active counterchances.



15 ... ♔h8

15...f5 16 ♗h6 ♕f6 17 ♗xg7 ♕xg7 18 ♕xg7+ ♔xg7 19 exf5 ♘6xf5 20 ♖ae1 ♖ae8 21 ♘e4 gives White a comfortable edge, but certainly no forced win.

16 ♕g4

To prevent ...f5.

16 ... c6

Too passive. Black should seize the opportunity for 16...c5!.

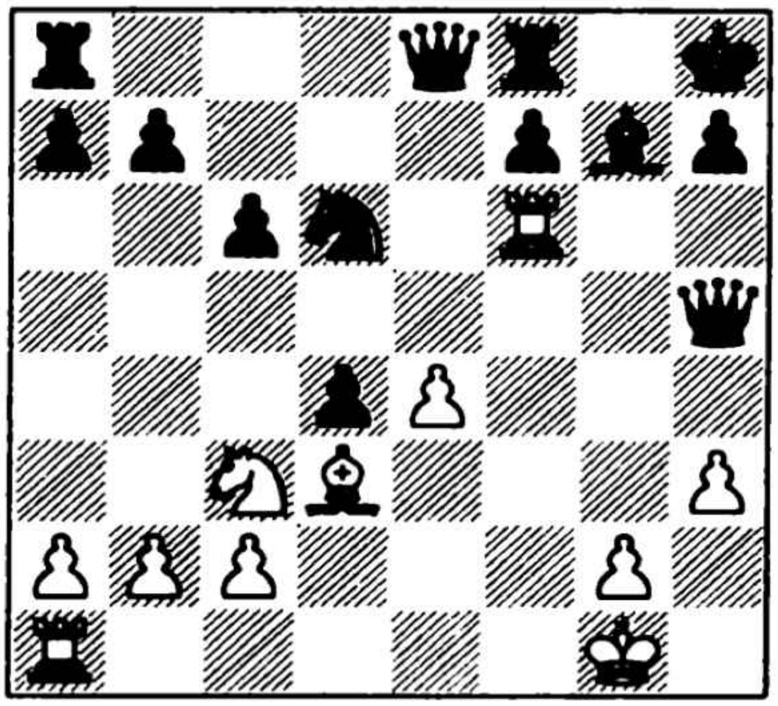
17 ♕h5

Threatening the deadly 18 ♗xd4 exd4 19 e5.

Either 17...♘e6 or 17...c5 is essential.

18 ♗xd4 exd4

19 ♖f6! *(D)*



The *zwischenzug* Benko missed. He had expected 19 e5 f5!.

A bolt from the blue!

19 ... ♔g8

Forced. On 19...dxc3 (19...♗xf6 is the same), 20 e5 mates.

20 e5 h6

21 ♘e2! 1-0

Black was hoping for 21 ♖xd6 ♕xe5! and he can survive to an ending.

There is no defence to the threat of ♖xd6. On 21...♘b5, 22 ♕f5 wins, whilst 21...♗xf6 22 ♕xh6 forces mate.

Game 47

Fischer – Bisguier [USA]

USA Ch 1963/4

Ruy Lopez

The Indian sign?

Bisguier is the one grandmaster who consistently obtains decent positions against Fischer, only to throw them away for no apparent reason. Out of something like a dozen encounters, he has squeezed but a single draw.

Here is the only game in which Bisguier is outplayed from the start. Still, he does catch Fischer napping and nearly escapes. Describing his sensations before the game, Bisguier wrote:

"For the first time I was really in doubt as to what Bobby would play against me as White... I was hoping to play the black side of the King's Gambit or the Two Knights' Defence, but he 'surprised' me with the Ruy Lopez... taken by surprise I was not so prepared or comfortable as I would like to have been. Now that Bobby has added psychology to his arsenal of weapons he is a much more dangerous opponent than ever before."

2 ♘f3

In a previous round, against Larry Evans, I had hazarded a King's Gambit: 2 f4 exf4 3 ♗c4 ♕h4+ 4 ♔f1 and White won only after some uneasy moments.

2 ... ♘c6
3 ♗b5 a6
4 ♗a4 ♘f6
5 0-0 ♗e7
6 ♖e1 b5
7 ♗b3 0-0
8 c3 d6

Bernstein tried the Marshall Attack against me in the 1959/60 US Ch, and an interesting struggle developed: 8...d5!? 9 exd5 e4 (in place of the usual 9...♘xd5) 10 dxc6 exf3 11 ♕xf3 ♗g4 12 ♕g3 ♗d6 13 ♕h4 ♖e8 14 f3 ♗f5 15 d4 ♗xh2+ 16 ♔xh2 ♘g4+ 17 ♔g3 ♕xh4+ 18 ♔xh4 ♖xe1 19 fxg4 ♖xc1 20 gxf5 ♖d8 21 a4! and White won shortly.

9 h3 ♘a5
10 ♗c2 c5
11 d4 ♕c7

For 11...♘d7 see Game 38.

12 ♘bd2 ♘c6
13 dxc5

The Rauzer Attack. White gives up the centre in order to exploit Black's weakened squares on d5 and f5.

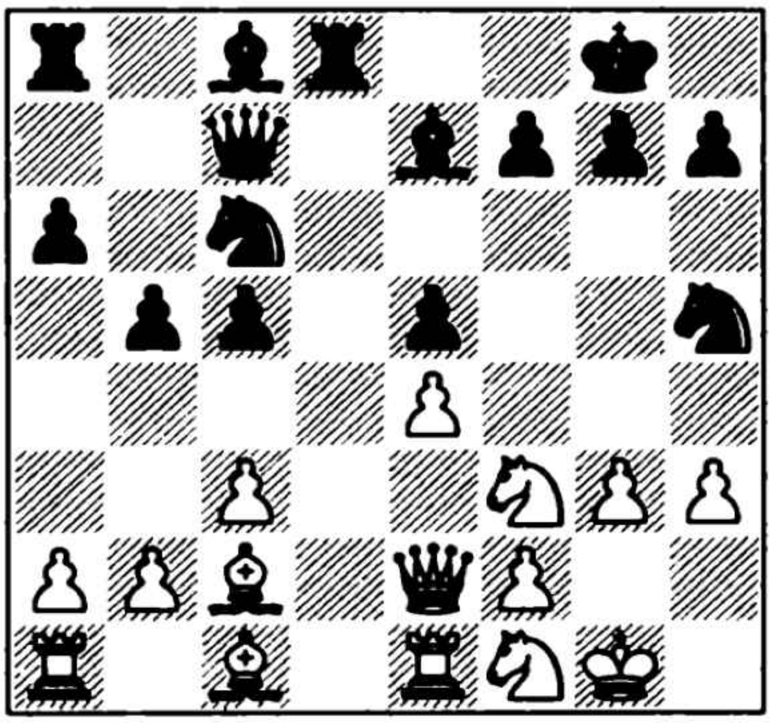
13 ... dxc5
14 ♘f1 ♖d8

Risky. Better is the usual 14...♗e6 15 ♘e3 ♖ad8 16 ♕e2 g6, etc.

An old line rehabilitated by Reshevsky against Bronstein at Zurich Ct 1953. If now 15...♗e6, 16 ♘e3 g6 17 ♘g5 ♗c8 18 ♘d5! ♘xd5 19 exd5 ♗xg5 (19...♖xd5 20 ♕f3! ♗e6 21 ♘xe6 fxe6 22 ♕g4!) 20 ♗xg5 ♖xd5 21 ♖ad1 with a plus (Lipnitsky).

16 g3! *(D)*

Bronstein's move after first interpolating 16 a4 ♖b8.



This idea bankrupts Black's strategy. The slight kingside weakening is inconsequential, but Black's loss of time with his king's knight is not.

Actually the sharpest continuation is 16 a4! as I had played against Eliskases at Mar del Plata 1960 (I simply forgot to interpolate it here) which continued: 16...♖b8 17 axb5 axb5 18 g3! g6 19 h4! ♗e6 20 ♘e3 c4 21 ♘g5 ♗xg5 22 hxg5 ♘a5 23 ♘g4 ♗xg4 24 ♕xg4 ♘b3 25 ♗xb3 cxb3 26 ♗e3 with a great advantage for White.

16 ... g6

Simply 16...♘f6 may be best, e.g. 17 h4 h6 18 ♘e3 ♗e6.

16...♗xh3 is bad owing to 17 ♘g5 ♗xg5 (after 17...♗xf1 18 ♕xh5 ♗xg5 19 ♗xg5 f6 20 ♗xf6! gxf6 21 ♔xf1 White is better) 18 ♗xg5 ♘f6 (not 18...♗xf1? 19 ♗xd8) 19 ♗xf6 gxf6 20 ♘e3, when White has more than enough for the pawn.

17 h4!

Bronstein's 17 ♔h2 and Weinstein's 17 ♔g2 are time-consuming and hence weaker.

When I told Bronstein (at Mar del Plata 1960) that the text was a tremendous improvement over his game with Reshevsky, he replied: "Of course. After seven years one must find an improvement."

17 ... ♗e6

18 ♘e3 f6

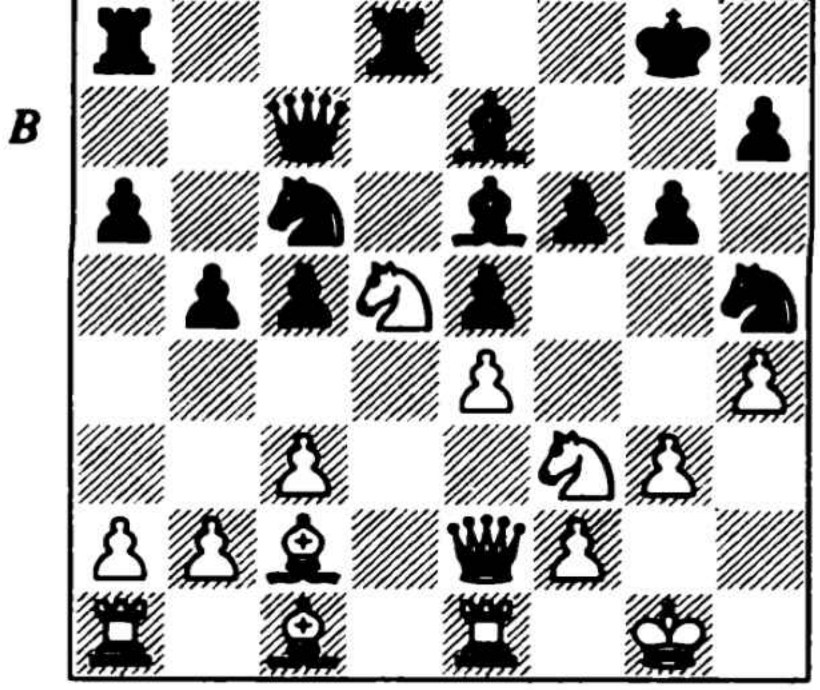
Probably best. 18...c4 19 ♘g5! is similar to the quoted game with Eliskases.

19 ♘d5! *(D)*

Of course! Chess is a matter of timing. Given another move or two Black would be able not only to defend himself against this invasion, but even try for the initiative.

19 ... ♕b7

Prudent. 'Winning' the pawn would allow White's bishop-pair to enter the game with powerful effect: e.g. 19...♗xd5 20 exd5 ♖xd5 21 c4! ♘d4 22 ♘xd4 ♖xd4 23 cxb5 axb5 24 ♕xb5 and now Eliskases recommends 24...c4 but I fail to see how this improves matters since 25 ♗e3 ♖b8 26 ♕a4 ♖b4? is answered by 27 ♕e8+.



20 ♘xe7+ ♕xe7

White has the two bishops or a 'half point' advantage.

21 ♘h2

This knight is also bound for d5.

21 ... ♘g7

22 ♘g4 c4

23 ♕f3!

Winning the second 'minor exchange'. After 23...♖f8 24 ♘e3 the knight is ready to pounce on d5, especially after Black's rook has been deflected from the d-file.

23 ... ♗xg4

24 ♕xg4 ♘e6

25 h5?

More accurate is 25 ♗e3 (since 25...♘c5? 26 ♗xc5 ♕xc5 27 ♕e6+ ♔g7 28 ♖ad1 penetrates decisively).

25 ... ♔h8!

Alert play. I had expected 25...g5 whereupon 26 ♗e3 is even more devastating than before.

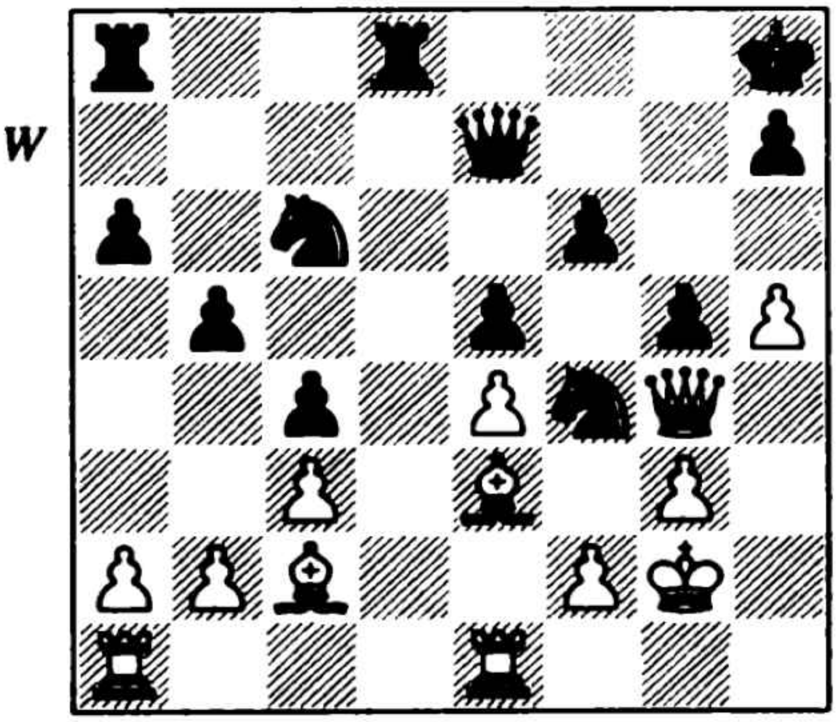
26 ♔g2!

26 hxg6 ♖g8 leaves White in trouble!

26 ... g5

Forced—eventually. On 26...♖g8, 27 ♖h1 gxh5? (27...g5 is better) 28 ♕xh5 ♘f4+ 29 ♗xf4 exf4 30 e5! ♖g7 31 exf6 ♕xf6 32 ♗xh7 wins.

27 ♗e3 ♘f4+! *(D)*



28 ♔h2!

After 28 gxf4? gxf4, threatening 29...♖g8 as well as 29...fxe3, Black regains the piece advantageously.

28 ... ♘d3

29 ♗xd3 cxd3?

Now the advanced soldier must fall. Exchanging a pair of rooks would make it more difficult, but White still maintains his grip after 29...♖xd3 30 ♖ed1 ♖ad8 31 ♖xd3 cxd3 (31...♖xd3? 32 ♕c8+ ♘d8 33 ♕xa6) 32 ♖d1 ♖d7 33 ♖d2 threatening a winning bind with ♗c5.

30 ♖ed1 ♖d7

After 30...b4 31 ♖d2 bxc3 32 bxc3 ♕a3 33 ♖ad1 ♕xc3 34 ♕e6

31 ♖d2 ♘a5

A useless excursion, but there was no good defence. Strangely enough, Black's difficulty stems from his third move and its consequent weakening of b6. If the pawn were still on a7 (preventing a later ♗b6) he might well hold.

On 31...♖ad8 32 ♖ad1 ♕f7 33 ♗b6 ♖b8 34 ♗c5 ♖bd8 35 ♕f3 White picks up the d-pawn at his leisure.

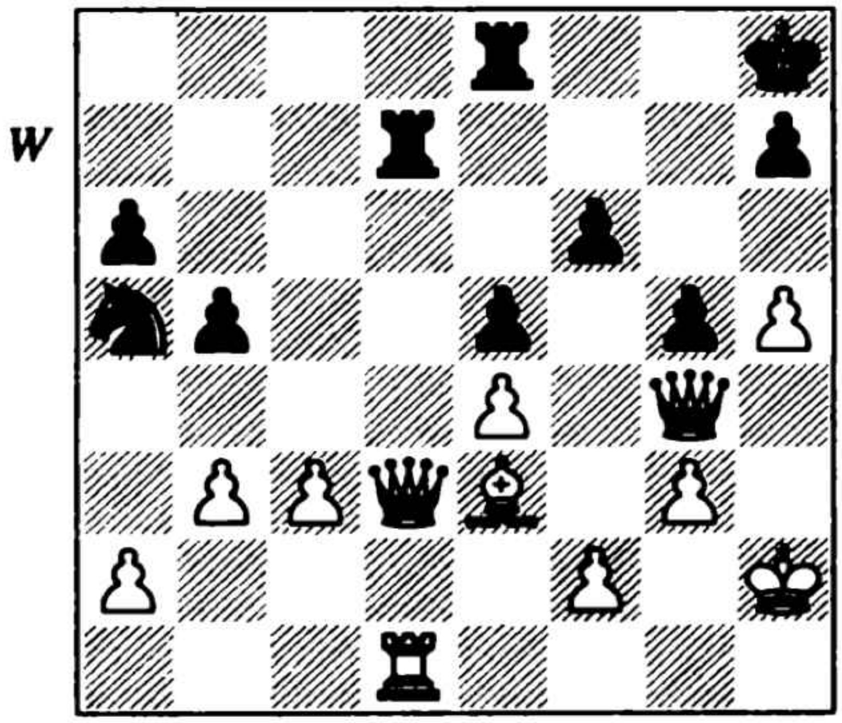
32 b3 ♕d6

Not 32...♖c8? 33 ♖xd3!.

33 ♖ad1 ♖e8

After 33...♖ad8 34 ♖xd3 ♕xd3 35 ♖xd3 ♖xd3 White has 36 ♗b6!.

34 ♖xd3 ♕xd3 *(D)*



Black is braced to give up his queen for two rooks and keep control of the crucial d-file.

35 ♕xd7! 1-0

A devastating X-ray. It's just a matter of time after 34...♕xd7 35 ♖xd7, e.g. 35...♖e6 36 ♔h3 intend-

The brilliancy prize

K. F. Kirby, editor of the *South African Chess Quarterly*, summed up the astonishment and admiration of the chess world when he wrote:

"The Byrne game was quite fabulous, and I cannot call to mind anything to parallel it. After White's eleventh move I should adjudicate his position as slightly superior, and at worst completely safe. To turn this into a mating position in eleven more moves is more witchcraft than chess! Quite honestly, I do not see the man who can stop Bobby at this time..."

And one can add nothing to Byrne's own words:

"And as I sat pondering why Fischer would choose such a line, because it was so obviously lost for Black, there suddenly came 18...♘xg2. This dazzling move came as the shocker... The culminating combination is of such depth that, even at the very moment at which I resigned, both grandmasters who were commenting on the play for the spectators in a separate room believed that I had a won game!"

1 d4 ♘f6
2 c4 g6
3 g3 c6
4 ♝g2

In the 1962/3 US Ch we reached the same position, but Byrne continued 4 d5 b5! 5 dxc6 bxc4 6 cxd7+ ♘bxd7 7 ♝g2 ♜b8 8 ♘f3 ♝g7 9 0-0 0-0 =. Black's weak c-pawn is compensated for by pressure on the open b-file.

4 ... d5
5 cxd5

5 ♛b3 maintains more tension.

5 ... cxd5
6 ♘c3 ♝g7
7 e3

Benko-Fischer, US Ch 1962/3, continued 7 ♘f3 0-0 8 ♘e5 (8 0-0 ♘e4! is equal) 8...♝f5 9 0-0 ♘e4 10 ♛b3 ♘c6 11 ♛xd5 ♘xc3 12 bxc3 ♛xd5 13 ♝xd5 ♘xe5 14 dxe5 ♝xe5, with a draw shortly.

7 ... 0-0
8 ♘ge2 ♘c6
9 0-0 b6

10 b3

It's hard for either side to introduce any imbalance into this essentially symmetrical variation.

Deadeye equality also ensues after 10 ♘f4 e6 11 b3 ♗a6 12 ♖e1 ♖c8 13 ♗a3 ♖e8 14 ♖c1, etc.; Ståhlberg-Flohr, Kemeri 1937.

10 ... ♗a6
11 ♗a3 ♖e8
12 ♕d2

A good alternative is 12 ♖c1.

A kibitzer later suggested 12 f4?! to prevent ...e5, but after 12...e6 followed by ...♗f8 and eventual doubling on the c-file, Black gets an advantage.

12 ... e5!

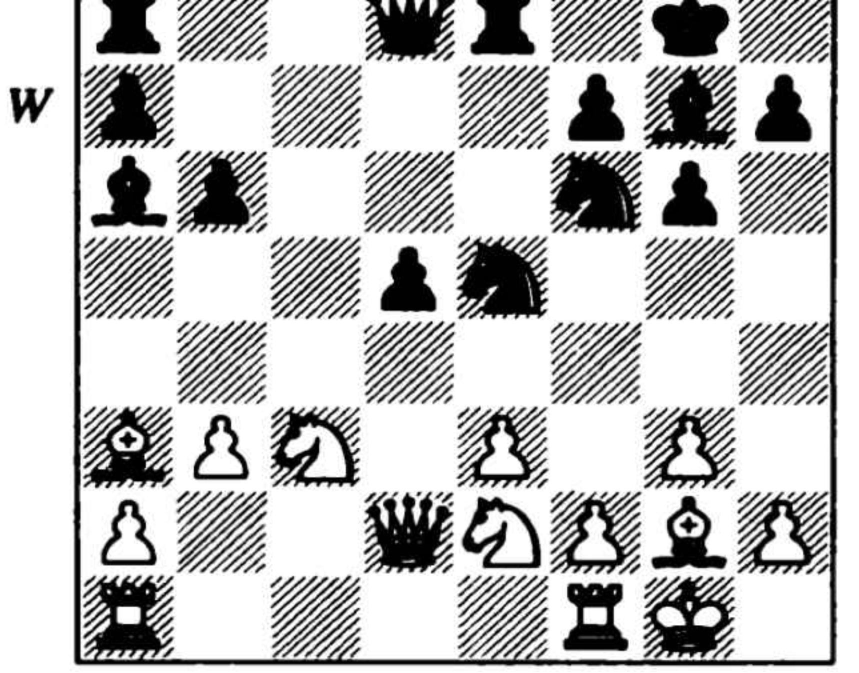
I was a bit worried about weakening my d-pawn, but felt that the tremendous activity obtained by my minor pieces would permit White no time to exploit it. 12...e6 would probably lead to a draw.

13 dxe5

13 ♖ac1 is passive: 13...exd4 (13...♖c8 14 ♖fd1 e4 15 f3! is tenable for White) 14 exd4 ♖c8 15 f3 although Black has difficulty breaking through.

13 ... ♘xe5 *(D)*
14 ♖fd1?

Add another to those melancholy case histories entitled 'the wrong rook'. 14 ♖ad1! is correct. Originally I gave the following 'refutation': "14...♘e4 15 ♘xe4 dxe4 16 ♗xe4 ♕xd2 17 ♖xd2 ♘c4 18 ♗xa8 ♘xd2 19 ♖d1 ♘c4 20 bxc4 (best) 20...♖xa8 regaining the pawn with a big endgame advantage." But Averbakh found a hole in my analysis with 20 ♗c6! (instead of 20 bxc4 which I had carelessly given as 'best') 20...♘xa3 21 ♗xe8 ♗xe2 22 ♖d7 and White is the one who wins instead of Black!



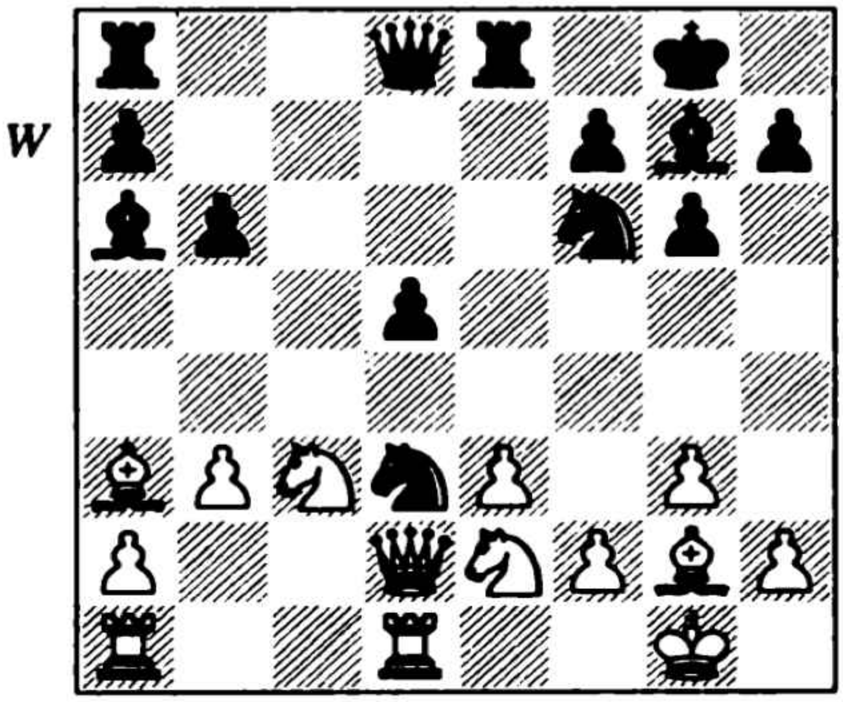
I spent an evening just staring at the position after 14 ♖ad1 trying everything, unwilling to let my brilliancy go down the drain. The more I looked, the more I liked White's game! For example, after 14...♖c8 (14...♘d3 is refuted by 15 ♕c2) 15 ♘xd5 ♘xd5 16 ♗xd5 ♗d3 17 ♗g2 ♖c2, 18 ♕xc2! is kaput. No better is 14...♕d7 15 ♕c2 followed by ♖d2 and ♖ed1 (if 15...♖c8, then 16 ♕b1!).

Another try which just falls short is 14 ♖ad1 ♕c7 15 ♕c1! ♘e4!? (otherwise 16 ♕b1 consolidates) 16 ♘xd5! ♕xc1 17 ♘xc1 ♗xf1 18 ♗xe4 ♗h3 19 ♘e7+ ♔h8 20 ♗xa8 ♖xa8 21 f4 keeping the extra pawn.

Indeed, how does Black even equalise, let alone sustain the initiative?

Finally I found 14...♕c8!—the only move to keep the pressure. Now 15 ♘xd5 ♘xd5 16 ♗xd5 ♖d8 17 f4 ♖xd5! 18 ♕xd5 ♗b7! 19 ♕d8+ (19 ♕d2 ♕h3! 20 ♘d4 ♘g4 21 ♖fe1 [or 21 ♘c2 h5 with a strong attack] 21...♘xe3! should win for Black) 19...♕xd8 20 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 21 fxe5 ♗xe5 gives Black the better ending. And after 15 ♖c1 ♕d7! 16 ♖cd1 ♖ad8 Black has finagled a precious tempo, since his queen is on d7 instead of d8. After 14...♕c8!, 15 ♗b2 is relatively best (instead after 15 ♕c1 ♘e4 16 ♘xd5 ♗xe2 17 ♗xe4 ♔h8! Black wins the exchange; one possible line is 18 ♕xc8 ♖axc8 19 ♘e7 ♖c7 20 ♖c1 ♖d7 21 ♖fe1 ♗f3!) although Black keeps the initiative with 15...♕f5.

14 ... ♘d3! *(D)*



15 ♕c2

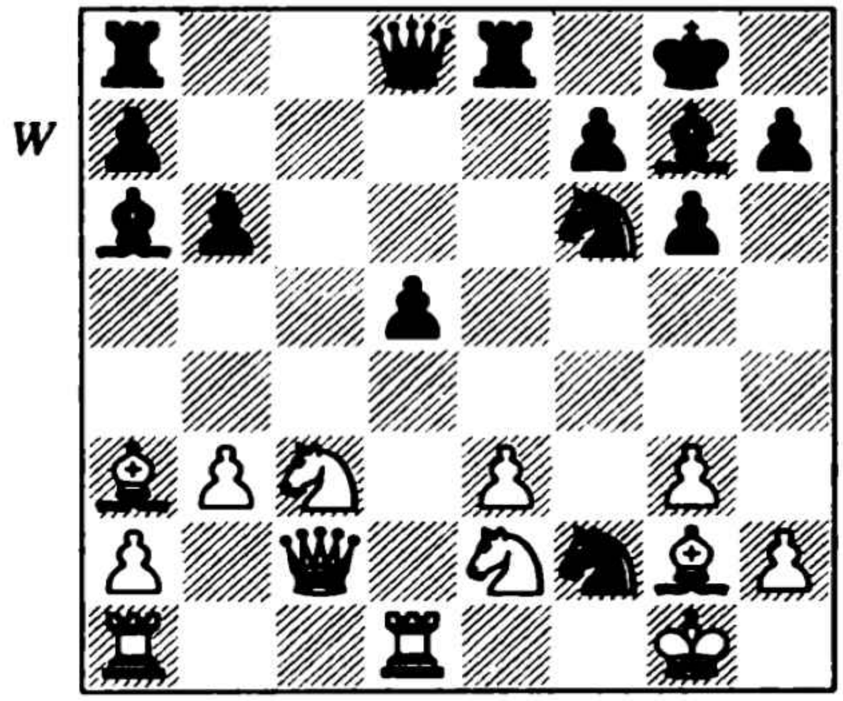
There is hardly any other defence to the threat of ...♘e4:

a) 15 ♘d4 ♘e4 16 ♘xe4 dxe4 17 ♗b2 ♖c8 with a powerful bind.

b) 15 ♘f4 ♘e4 16 ♘xe4 dxe4 (not 16...♗xa1? 17 ♘d6) 17 ♖ab1 ♖c8 18 ♘xd3 ♗c3! 19 ♕e2 ♗xd3 20 ♕g4 f5 21 ♕h3 ♗xb1! 22 ♖xd8 ♖exd8 23 ♗f1 ♖d1 24 ♔g2 ♗d3! 25 ♗xd3 exd3 wins.

c) 15 f3 ♗h6 16 f4 (16 ♘f4? d4!) 16...♗g7! resumes the threat of ...♘e4, only White has weakened himself in the interim.

15 ... ♘xf2! *(D)*



The key to Black's previous play. The complete justification for this sac does not become apparent until White resigns!

16 ♔xf2 ♘g4+
17 ♔g1 ♘xe3
18 ♕d2

Forced. Now after 18...♘xd1 19 ♖xd1 White is alright again.

18 ... ♘xg2!

Removing this key bishop leaves White completely defenceless on his light squares.

19 ♔xg2 d4!

20 ♘xd4 ♗b7+

The king is totally at Black's mercy.

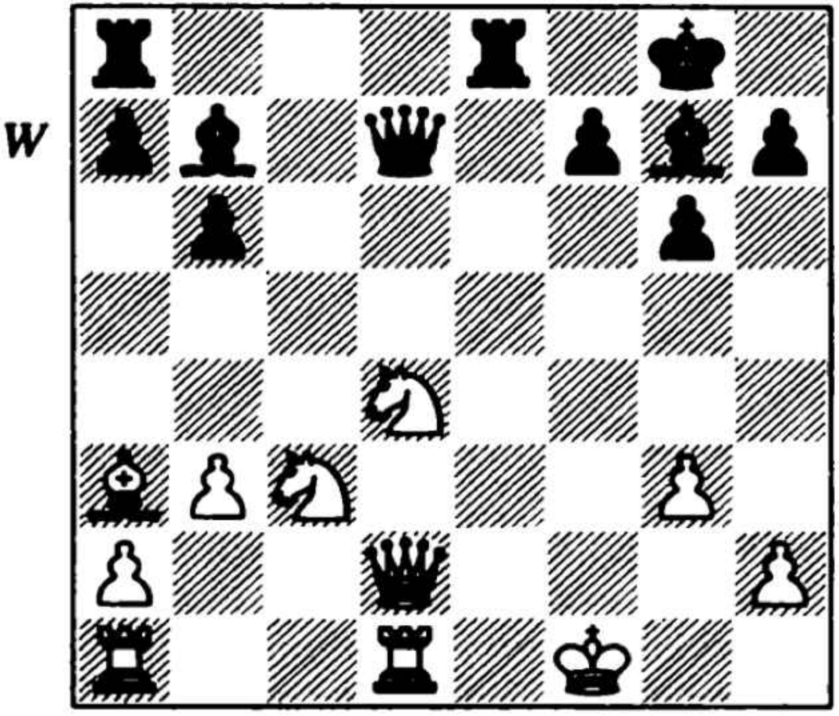
21 ♔f1

Equally hopeless is 21 ♔g1 ♗xd4+ 22 ♕xd4 ♖e1+! 23 ♔f2 ♕xd4+ 24 ♖xd4 ♖xa1 25 ♖d7 ♖c8 26 ♖xb7 (26 ♗b2 ♖h1) 26...♖xc3 27 ♖b8+ ♔g7 28 ♗b2 ♖xa2, etc.

Or 21 ♔f2 ♕d7! 22 ♖ac1 ♕h3 23 ♘f3 ♗h6 24 ♕d3 ♗e3+ 25 ♕xe3 ♖xe3 26 ♔xe3 ♖e8+ 27 ♔f2 ♕f5! finis!

21 ... ♕d7! *(D)*

0-1



A bitter disappointment. I'd been hoping for 22 ♕f2 ♕h3+ 23 ♔g1 ♖e1+!! 24 ♖xe1 ♗xd4 with mate to follow. Also 22 ♘db5 ♕h3+ 23 ♔g1 ♗h6 and the curtain comes down.

Game 49

Fischer – Steinmeyer [USA]

USA Ch 1963/4

Caro-Kann Defence

A complex trap

While generally thought of as 'one-movers', some opening traps are deeper and more beautiful than others because falling into them requires a certain degree of skill. They might not attract the victim and, if they did, are sufficiently complex that they might actually work *for* an amateur!

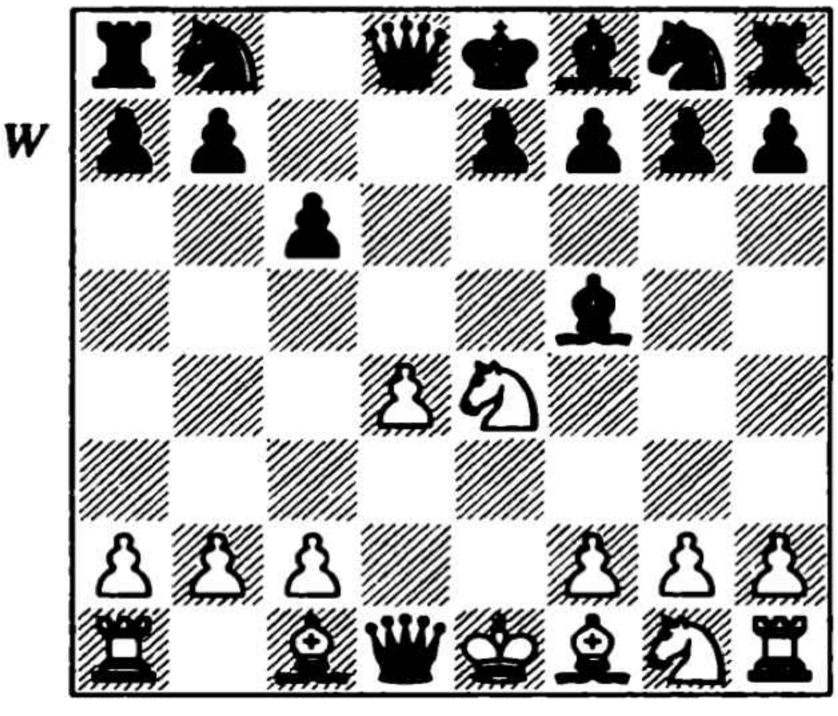
Steinmeyer's concept beginning with 13...♕f4+ is both subtle and novel. The only trouble is that it meets with a smashing refutation. Instead of simplifying, as Steinmeyer hopes, his variation enmeshes him in complications. The nail in the coffin is 16 ♘e5, after which Black's queen can no longer be extricated without fatal loss of material.

1 e4 c6

For 2 ♘c3 d5 3 ♘f3 see Game 16.

3 ♘c3 dxe4

4 ♘xe4 ♗f5 *(D)*



5 ♘g3

On tour (1964) I experimented with the weird 5 ♘c5!?. Most of my opponents countered with 5...e5 6 ♘xb7 ♕xd4 (if 6...♕b6 7 ♘c5 ♗xc5 8 dxc5 ♕xc5 9 c3 White's better; Fischer-Petrosian, five-minute game, Bled 1961) 7 ♕xd4 exd4 8 ♗d3 with the better ending for White. Some replied with 5...b6 6 ♘a6 ♘xa6 7 ♗xa6 ♕d5!. Still others played 5...♕c7 6 ♗d3 ♗xd3 7 ♘xd3 e6. White has more space, but only experience can tell whether he has the edge; however, the knight on d3 discourages the freeing manoeuvres ...c5 and/or ...e5. At least it's something to break the monotony.

5 ... ♗g6

6 ♘f3 ♘f6

More usual is the immediate 6...♘d7 to prevent ♘e5.

7 h4

7 ♗d3 (if 7 ♘e5 ♘bd7 8 ♘xg6 hxg6 Black is solid) 7...e6 8 0-0 ♗e7 9 c4 0-0 10 ♗xg6 hxg6 leads to equality; Evans-Benko, US Ch 1962/3.

7 ... h6

8 ♗d3

White can try to exploit the order of Black's moves by 8 ♘e5, but 8...♗h7 9 ♗c4 e6 10 ♕e2 ♘d5! (not 10...♕xd4? 11 ♘xf7!) followed by ...♘d7 equalises.

8 h5 ♗h7 9 ♗d3 ♗xd3 10 ♕xd3 e6 11 ♗d2 ♘bd7 12 0-0-0 ♕c7 13 ♘e4 (Spassky-Petrosian, Moscow Wch (13) 1966 continued 13 ♕e2 0-0-0 14 ♘e5 ♘xe5 15 dxe5 ♘d7 16 f4 with an edge) 13...0-0-0 14 g3! (Geller-Petrosian, Moscow 1967) and now 14...♘xe4 (instead of 14...♘g4?) 15 ♕xe4 ♗d6 limits White to a minimal pull.

8 ... ♗xd3

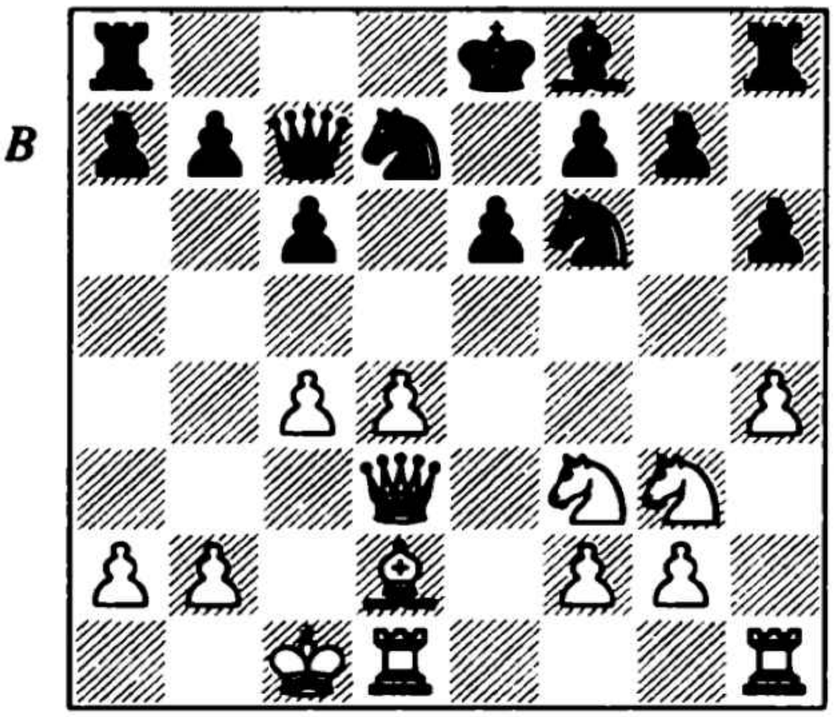
9 ♕xd3 e6

10 ♗d2 ♘bd7

Or 10...♕c7 11 c4 (11 0-0-0 ♗d6 12 ♘e4 ♗f4! 13 ♘xf6+ gxf6 is satisfactory for Black) 11...♘bd7 12 ♗c3 (the whole idea is to prevent Black from swapping bishops) 12...a5! 13 0-0!? (if 13 0-0-0 ♗b4!) 13...♗d6 14 ♘e4 (Tal suggested 14 d5!? mixing it up, but 14...♗xg3! holds; then not 15 dxe6? ♘e5, but 15 fxg3 cxd5 16 cxd5 ♘xd5 17 ♗xg7 ♖g8 18 ♕h7 ♘7f6 19 ♗xf6 ♘xf6 20 ♕xh6 ♕xg3 21 ♕d2 which is level) 14...♘xe4 15 ♕xe4 0-0 = ; Fischer-Donner, Varna OL 1962.

11 0-0-0 ♕c7

12 c4 *(D)*



12 ... 0-0-0

12...♗d6! 13 ♘e4 (13 ♘e2 0-0-0 14 ♔b1 e5 is equal) 13...♗f4! leads to immediate simplifications.

13 ♗c3!

Now Black no longer can force the exchange of bishops.

13 ... ♕f4+?

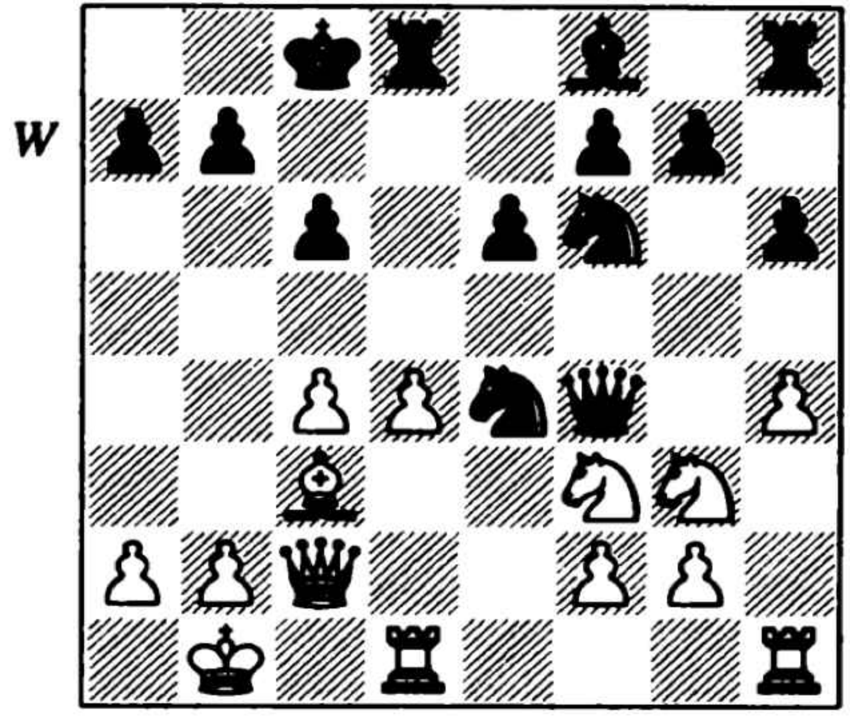
The start of a faulty concept. After 13...♗d6 (if 13...c5, White can respond with 14 d5!), 14 ♘e4 ♗f4+ 15 ♔b1 ♘e5! 16 ♘xe5 ♗xe5 produces equality.

14 ♔b1 ♘c5?

He still has time to back out with 14...♕c7.

15 ♕c2 ♘ce4 *(D)*

Now there is no turning back. On 15...♘cd7, 16 ♘e5! is very strong; e.g. 16...♘xe5 17 dxe5 ♘d7 (alternatively, 17...♘g4 18 ♖xd8+ ♔xd8 19 ♖d1+ ♔c8 20 ♖d4) 18 ♖d4 ♕xe5 19 ♖xd7!, etc.



A clear refutation. The queen's retreat is cut off and Black's ancient weakness on f7 is etched more sharply than ever. The game Shamkovich-Goldberg, USSR 1961 continued with 16 ♗a5?, which won only against inferior defence.

16 ... ♘xf2

What else? 16...♘xg3 loses to 17 fxg3 ♕xg3 18 ♖d3 ♕f4 19 ♖f3 ♕e4 20 ♘xf7. And 16...♘xc3+ is refuted by 17 bxc3! ♖g8 (if 17...♘g4, 18 ♘h5! ♕f5 19 ♕xf5 exf5 20 ♘xf7) 18 ♖d3 h5 19 ♖f3 ♕h6 20 ♘xf7, etc.

17 ♖df1! 1-0

Probably what Steinmeyer overlooked when he went into this whole mess. After 17...♕xg3 18 ♖xf2 ♕e3 (otherwise ♖f3) 19 ♖e2 ♕f4 20 ♘xf7 White wins at least the exchange.

Motivated by my lopsided result (11-0!) Dr. Kmoch congratulated Evans (the runner-up) on 'winning' the tournament and then he congratulated me on 'winning the exhi-

Fischer – Celle [USA]

California 1964: Exhibition Tour

Evans Gambit

Tour de force

As one of ten simultaneous clock games played on tour, at Davis College, this is a perfect example of the precept that if White makes a slip in the opening he is punished by loss of the initiative, while if Black makes a slip (since he is skating on thin ice from the very start) it is likely to be fatal. 6...d6 is the offender.

With 9 ♕h5 Fischer assumes a commanding control of space, but faces a strong defence which compels him to offer a piece in order to maintain pressure. Continuing with restraint and circumspection, he builds up the attack with a series of quiet developing moves—reminiscent of Morphy's famous victory over the Duke of Brunswick at the Paris opera. When the time is ripe, Fischer throws everything at Black's king, including the proverbial kitchen sink. His show of brute force is handsomely rewarded.

1 e4 e5
2 ♘f3 ♘c6
3 ♗c4 ♗c5
4 b4!?

The Evans was already analysed to death by the 1890s, but it still makes for enterprising chess.

4 ... ♗xb4
5 c3 ♗e7

Must be the trend. At least, on tour most players answered this way. For 5...♗a5 see Game 44.

6 d4 d6?

A mistake is usually much more serious in these open games. Black must return the pawn with 6...♘a5! 7 ♘xe5 ♘xc4 8 ♘xc4 d5!.

7 dxe5 ♘xe5

On 7...♘a5?, 8 ♗xf7+! ♔xf7 9 ♕d5+ ♗e6 10 ♕xa5 wins a pawn. Or 7...dxe5 8 ♕b3 ♘a5 9 ♗xf7+ ♔f8 10 ♕a4 is strong.

8 ♘xe5 dxe5
9 ♕h5!

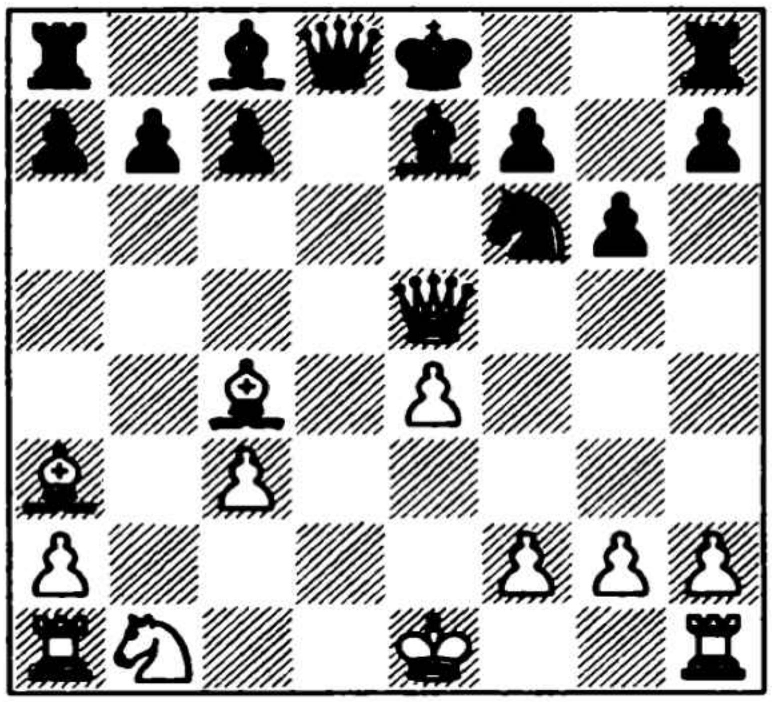
In an earlier exhibition game I played 9 ♕b3 but got nothing after 9...♗e6! 10 ♗xe6 fxe6 11 ♗a3!? (11 ♕xe6 ♕d6 is equal) 11...♕d3!.

9 ... g6
10 ♕xe5 ♘f6

10...f6 allows 11 ♕b5+! c6? 12 ♕b3 ♔f8 13 ♗xg8! winning.

11 ♗a3! *(D)*

B



Incredible how Black is so totally immobilised by this one move!

11 ... ♖f8

The only way to get some relief. 11...♔f8? works in all lines except 12 ♕xf6!.

12 0-0 ♘g4

12...♘d7 and then ...♘b6 might be better, but this certainly looked good at the time.

13 ♕g3 ♗xa3

14 ♘xa3 ♕e7!

Apparently Black has freed his game. If now 15 ♘c2, then 15...♕e5 virtually forces an exchange of queens. 15 ♘b5 is rendered harmless by 15...♘e5. How is White to sustain the initiative?

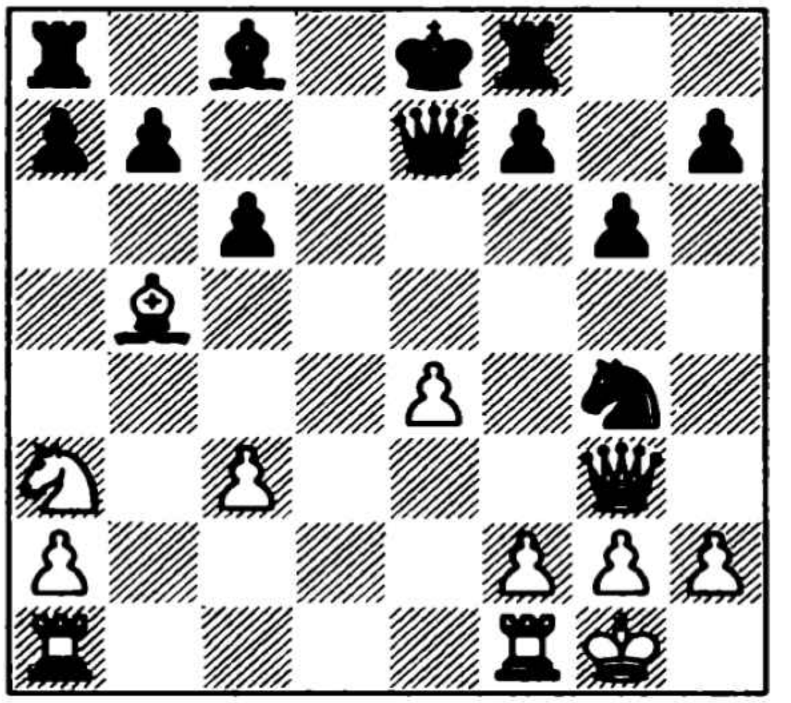
15 ♗b5+!

That's how. This forces Black to weaken d6, although White must sacrifice a piece to exploit it.

15 ... c6 *(D)*

15...♗d7 is met by 16 ♕xc7 (and not 16 ♕xg4 c6!).

W



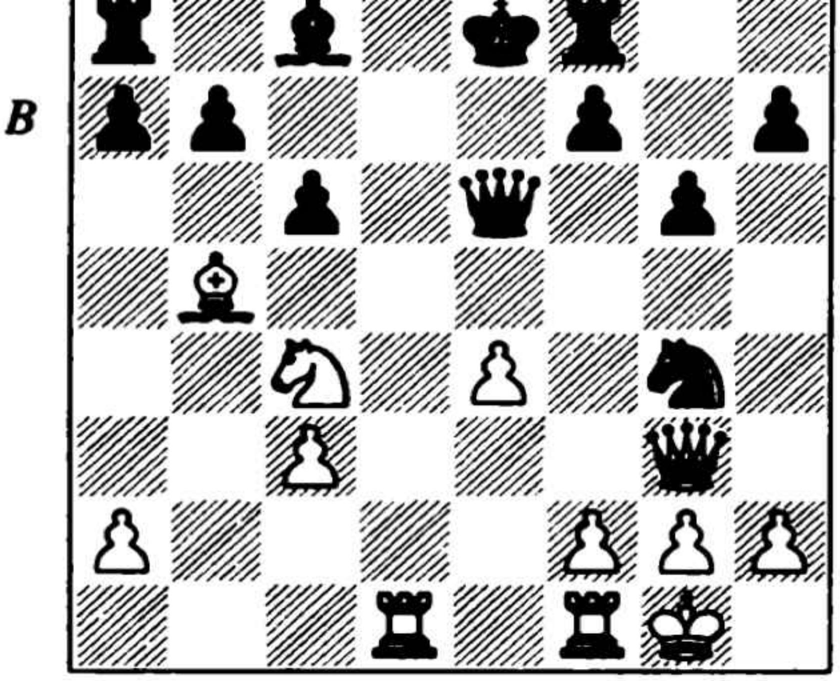
16 ♘c4! ♕e6!

Some fascinating possibilities appear after 16...cxb5 17 ♘d6+ ♔d8 18 ♖fd1 ♗d7 19 ♘xb7+ ♔c8 20 ♘d6+ ♔d8 21 ♖d4! ♘e5 22 ♖ad1 ♔c7 (if 22...g5, 23 ♘f5 ♕e8 24 ♕xe5! ♕xe5 25 ♖xd7+ ♔e8 [if 25...♔c8, 26 ♘e7+! wins] 26 ♖e7+! ♕xe7 27 ♘g7 mate) 23 f4 ♘g4 24 h3 ♘f6 25 f5 ♔b6 26 ♕e3 ♔c7 (after 26...♔a6, 27 a4 smashes Black) 27 ♖c4+! bxc4 (if 27...♔d8, 28 ♕c5 anyway) 28 ♕c5+ ♗c6 (if 28...♔d8, 29 ♕a5 mate; or 28...♔b8 29 ♖b1+) 29 ♘b5+, etc.

Black may not have seen the mate, but he suspected the worst!

17 ♖ad1! *(D)*

Piling on the pressure. White mustn't amateurishly rush in with 17 ♕c7 ♕d7! forcing him to simplify by 18 ♘d6+ ♔e7 19 ♘xc8+ ♖axc8 20 ♕xd7+ ♔xd7 etc., and the advantage has evaporated.



17 ... cxb5

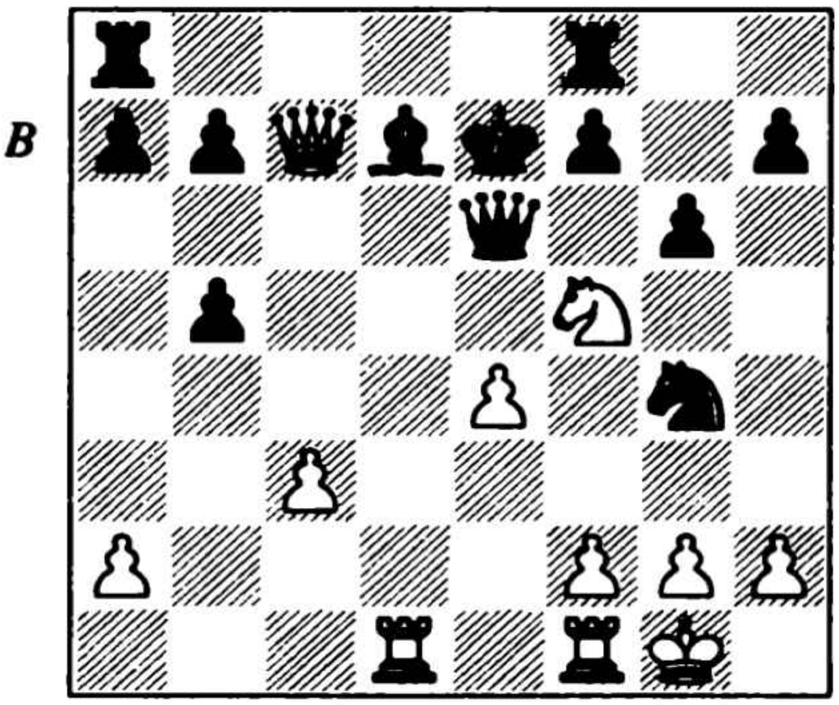
He might as well take it since after 17...♗d7 18 ♘d6+ ♔e7 19 ♗c4 White wins a pawn without any risk.

18 ♕c7 ♗d7

Forced.

19 ♘d6+ ♔e7

20 ♘f5+! *(D)*



The attack needs fresh fuel. Material is not what counts now, but open lines. Black is forced to capture against his will. 20...♔e8 is out because of 21 ♘g7+. And 20...♔f6 21 ♖d6 gxf5 22 ♕xd7! wins outright.

20 ... gxf5

21 exf5 ♖ac8

On 21...♕xf5, 22 ♕d6+ ♔d8 (22...♔e8 23 ♖fe1+ ♗e6 24 ♕d7 mate) 23 ♕xf8+ ♔c7 24 ♕xa8 wins.

22 ♖xd7+! ♕xd7

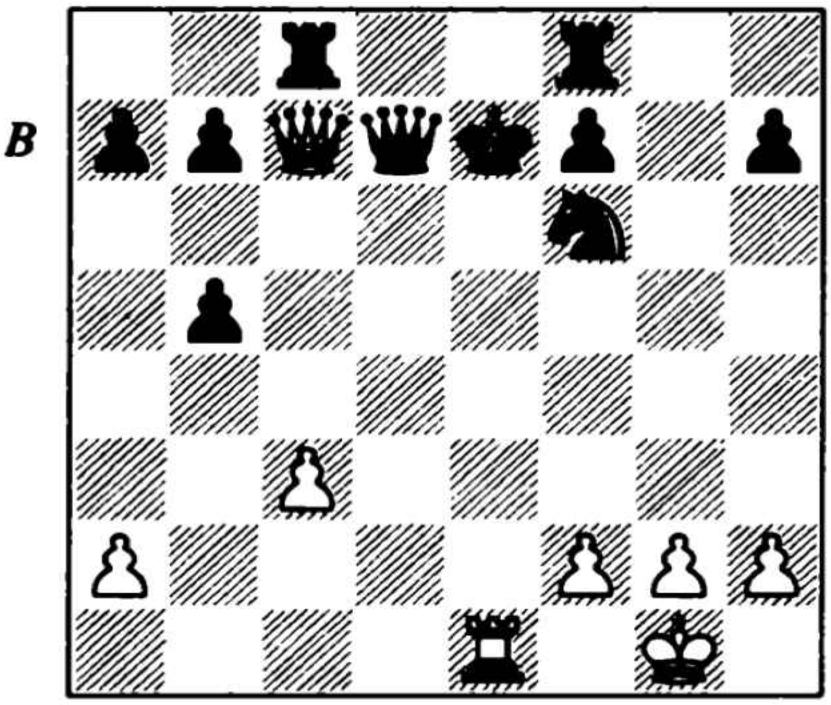
23 f6+!

Originally I intended 23 ♖e1+ ♘e5 24 ♖xe5+ ♔f6 25 ♕xd7 ♔xe5 26 ♕xb5+ with a won ending. But then I remembered Emanuel Lasker's maxim: "When you see a good move—wait—don't play it—you might find a better one."

23 ... ♘xf6

Not 23...♔e8? 24 ♖e1+ ♕e6 25 ♕xc8 mate. Or 23...♔xf6 24 ♕xd7.

24 ♖e1+ *(D)*



Note the amusing piece configuration. All Black's pieces are stepping on each other's toes.

24 ... ♘e4

25 ♖xe4+ ♔f6

26 ♕xd7 ♖fd8

27 ♕g4 1-0

Here I forgot Lasker's maxim. 27 ♕e7+ would have mated in four.

Squeeze play

Fischer competed in this Capablanca Memorial Tournament by long-distance telephone, and his victory over the winner is reminiscent of the famous Lasker-Capablanca duel at St. Petersburg 1914, where Black was also gradually constricted and strangled.

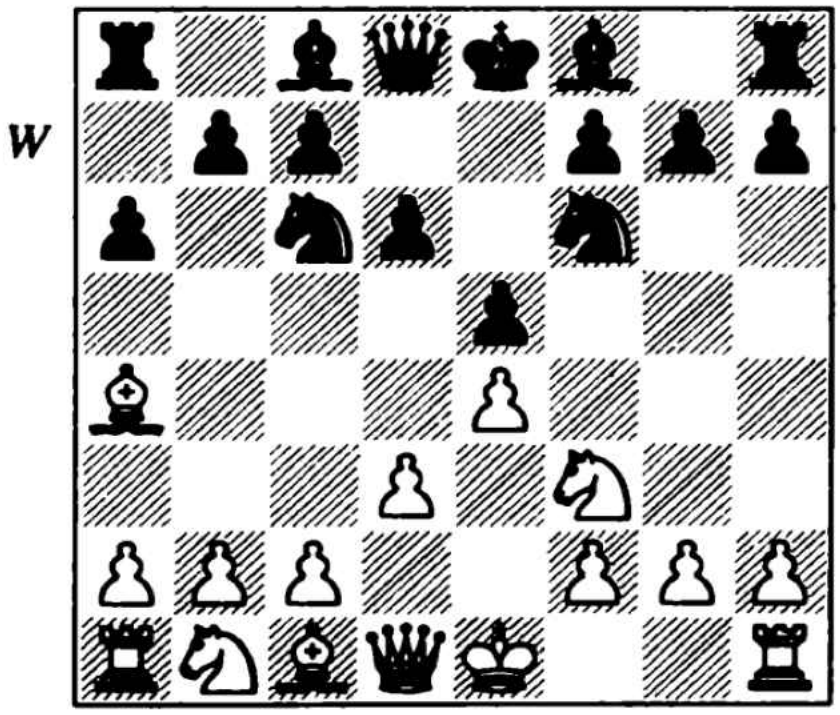
Taken by surprise with an antiquated line (5 d3) Smyslov soon gets into trouble. He finds a way out, although it burdens him with doubled e-pawns. After the subsequent exchange of queens he apparently underestimates White's winning chances and permits himself to drift into a cramped ending. Applying persistent pressure, Fischer makes gradual inroads; the defensive task eventually proves too great and Smyslov buckles under the strain.

1 e4 e5
2 ♘f3 ♘c6
3 ♗b5 a6
4 ♗a4 ♘f6
5 d3

Steinitz's favourite, long abandoned, and the first time I've employed it in a tournament game.

5 ... d6 *(D)*

Solid but passive. An alternative is 5...b5 6 ♗b3 ♗e7 7 a4, etc. Anderssen-Morphy, match 1858(!) continued: 5...♗c5 6 c3 b5 7 ♗c2 0-0 8 0-0 d5 9 exd5 ♘xd5 10 h3 h6 (Steinitz had a field day criticising White's last two moves) 11 d4 exd4 with a satisfactory game for Black.



6 c3 ♗e7

On 6...g6, 7 ♘bd2 (or Bronstein's 7 ♗g5) 7...♗g7 8 ♘f1 0-0 9 h4 opens fresh vistas.

7 ♘bd2 0-0

8 ♘f1

One facet of White's strategy is to defer castling and possibly institute a kingside attack with h3, g4, etc. Furthermore, this knight can be deployed to e3 or g3 immediately without having to waste a tempo (after having castled) with ♖e1.

8 ... b5
9 ♗b3 d5

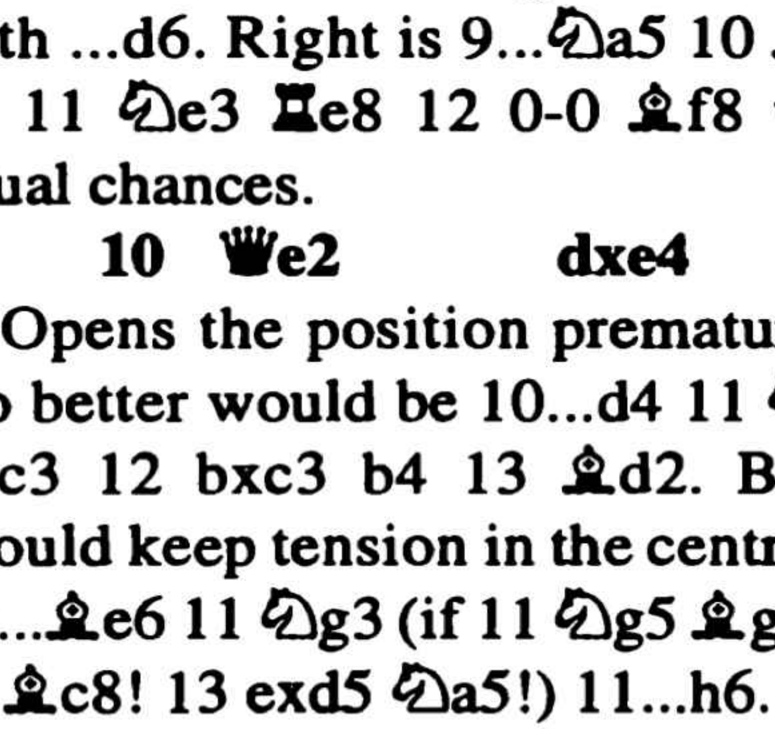
Inconsistent, having lost a tempo with ...d6. Right is 9...♘a5 10 ♗c2 c5 11 ♘e3 ♖e8 12 0-0 ♗f8 with equal chances.

10 ♕e2 dxe4

Opens the position prematurely. No better would be 10...d4 11 ♘g3 dxc3 12 bxc3 b4 13 ♗d2. Black should keep tension in the centre by 10...♗e6 11 ♘g3 (if 11 ♘g5 ♗g4 12 f3 ♗c8! 13 exd5 ♘a5!) 11...h6.

11 dxe4 ♗e6! *(D)*

W



I was surprised that Smyslov was prepared to saddle himself with doubled e-pawns, but surmised that it must be alright since he doesn't do such things lightly. Anyway, without this exchange, Black's game would remain permanently cramped.

12 ♗xe6 fxe6
13 ♘g3

This knight is undeniably misplaced here, but White intends to castle and then regroup his pieces in order to bring maximum pressure to bear on the doubled pawns.

13 ... ♕d7

Some annotators suggested the obvious 13...♗d6 (intending ...♘e7-g6, etc.) but Black has no time for such sophisticated strategy: e.g. 14 0-0 ♘e7 15 c4! c6 16 ♖d1 winning material (if 16...♕c7, 17 ♘g5).

14 0-0

During the game I was kicking myself for allowing the subsequent exchange of queens. Sharper is 14 a4 ♖ad8 (if 14...bxa4, 15 ♕c4 a3 16 b4) 15 axb5 axb5 16 ♖a6 b4 17 0-0 and Black can no longer ease his burden with ...♕d3. So 14...b4! is correct.

14 ... ♖ad8

Suddenly Black's plan hit me! At first I thought he just wanted to control the d-file; but now I realised he was scheming to chop wood.

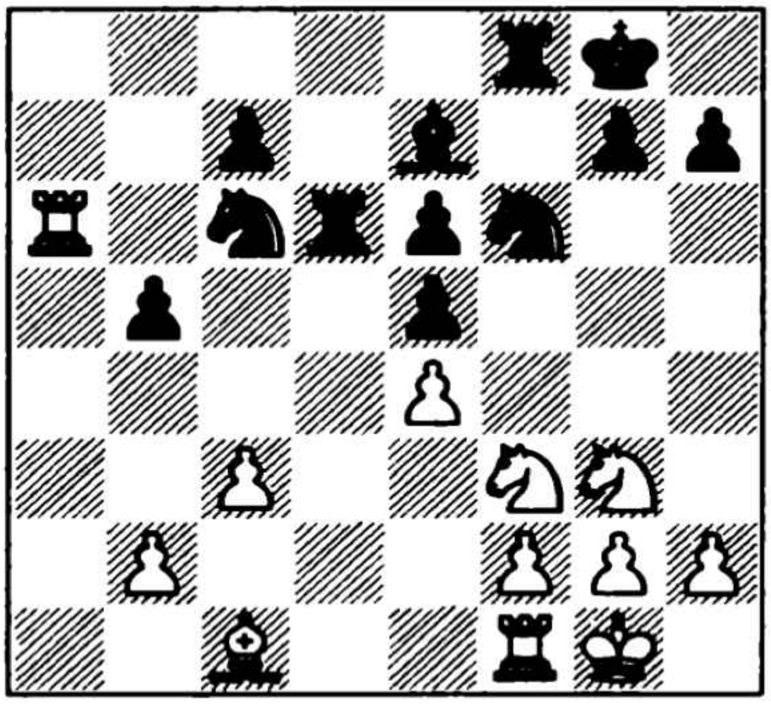
15 a4 ♕d3!

Of course! With the queens gone, it's that much harder to strike at Black's weaknesses.

16 ♕xd3 ♖xd3
17 axb5 axb5
18 ♖a6!

Forcing Black's reply, and thus preventing the freeing manoeuvre with ...♗c5. 18 ♗e3 would be met by 18...♘g4.

18 ... ♖d6 *(D)*



19 ♔h1!

The threat was 19...♘d4 forcing a favourable series of exchanges.

19 ... ♘d7

19...b4 20 cxb4 ♘xb4 21 ♖a7 ♖c6 22 ♘xe5 ♖c2 would give Black active play for the pawn.

20 ♗e3 ♖d8

20...b4 is still playable. Neither of us realised at this stage how essential this move was. I didn't want to weaken my c3 and c4 squares by playing b4 to prevent it; and Smyslov didn't want to commit himself.

21 h3

More accurate is 21 b4 from which I abstained for the reasons already mentioned.

21 ... h6

22 ♖fa1 ♘db8

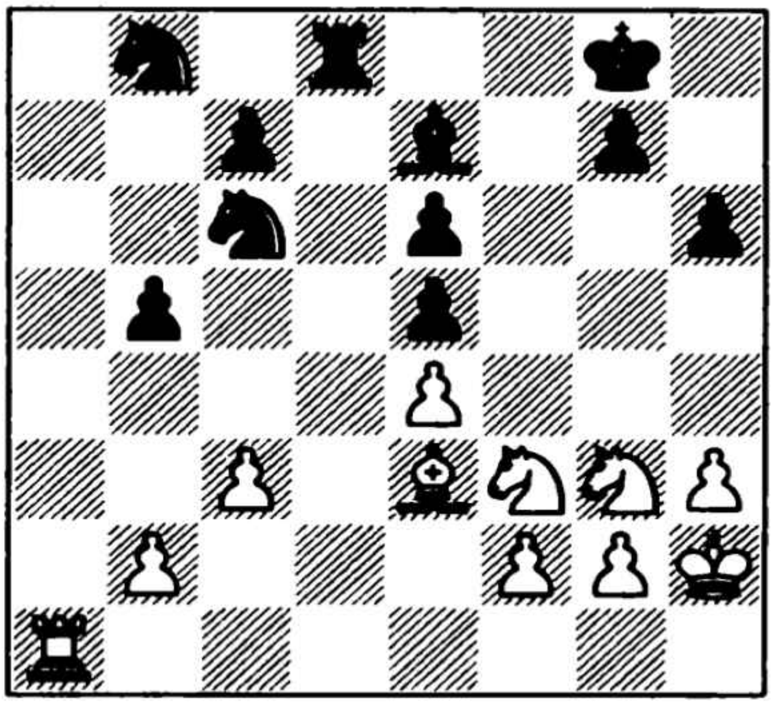
23 ♖a8 ♖d1+

24 ♔h2

On 24 ♖xd1 ♖xd1+ 25 ♔h2 ♗d6 Black holds (26 ♗a7? ♖a1!).

24 ... ♖xa1

25 ♖xa1 *(D)*



25 ... ♘d7?

When I spoke to Smyslov on the direct phone line immediately after the game, he congratulated me on a beautiful performance and attributed his loss to his reluctance to play ...b4 at some point—and this is his last chance. After 25...b4 26 cxb4 ♗xb4 27 ♘f1 Black obtains much more freedom than in the actual game, and eliminates a weakness (his b-pawn) as well. Perhaps Smyslov feared that in this line White could manoeuvre his knight to c4; even so, this is hardly fatal.

26 b4!

Smyslov confessed that he felt Black was probably lost after this riposte. But the win is far from easy, and Black might later have improved upon his defence.

26 ... ♔f7

27 ♘f1 ♗d6

28 g3

Once and for all negating all possible combinations with ...♘d4.

28 ... ♘f6

29 ♘1d2 ♔e7

30 ♖a6! ♘b8

Very uncomfortable is 30...♔d7 31 ♘e1 ♘b8 32 ♖a5 ♔c6.

31 ♖a5!

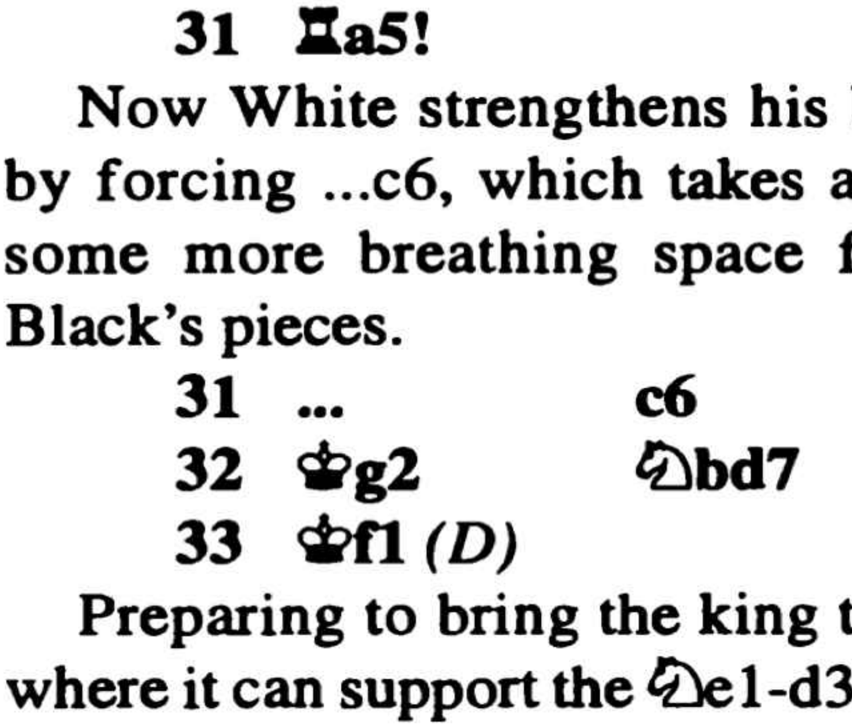
Now White strengthens his bind by forcing ...c6, which takes away some more breathing space from Black's pieces.

31 ... c6

32 ♔g2 ♘bd7

33 ♔f1 *(D)*

Preparing to bring the king to e2 where it can support the ♘e1-d3 manoeuvre.



33 ... ♖c8?

A surprise! I had expected the much stouter defence with 33...♘e8! (intending to exchange rooks with ...♘c7 and ...♖a8). After 34 ♖a6 ♖c8 35 ♘b3 c5 36 bxc5 ♗xc5! Black can hold. And there is no time for 34 ♘e1 ♘c7 35 ♘d3 ♖a8 36 ♘b3 ♖xa5 37 ♘xa5 ♘b8 38 ♗a7 ♘ca6 39 c4 ♗c7.

The main line is 33...♘e8 34 ♘b3! ♘c7 35 ♖a7 ♖a8 36 ♘a5 ♘b8 37 ♖xa8 (37 ♖b7 ♔d7) 37...♘xa8 38 ♗a7 ♔d7 39 ♘b7. It looks bad, but Black has chances to survive in the absence of a forced win.

34 ♘e1! ♘e8

Too late now.

35 ♘d3 ♘c7

36 c4! bxc4

36...♖a8? is refuted by 37 c5!, winning a piece.

37 ♘xc4

The ideal position! Finally White has ganged up on Black's venerable weakness—his pawn on e5.

37 ... ♘b5

On 37...♖a8, 38 ♖xa8 ♘xa8 39 ♘a5 ♘b8 40 ♗a7 ♔d7 41 ♘c4 picks off the e-pawn.

38 ♖a6

Keeping Black tied up some more.

38 ... ♔f6

38...♘b8 39 ♖a8 ♘c7 40 ♘xd6 ♔xd6 41 ♗c5+ wins.

39 ♗c1! ♗b8

40 ♗b2

Threatening f4.

40 ... c5

A desperate bid for some counterplay.

41 ♘b6!

41 ♖a5! also has a nasty sting; for if 41...cxb4, 42 ♘cxe5! wins outright.

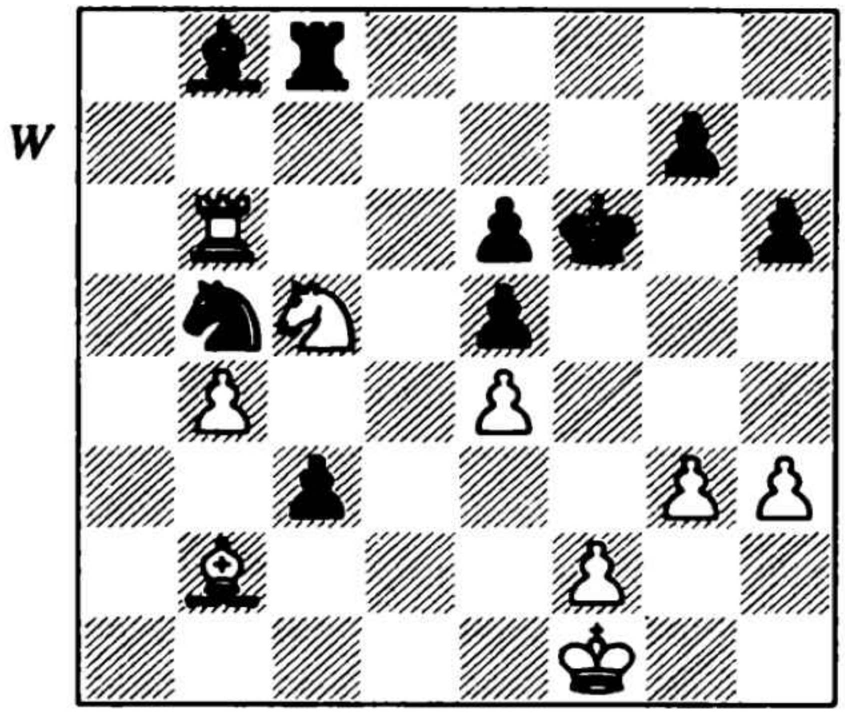
41 ... ♘xb6

42 ♖xb6 c4

On 42...♘d4, 43 ♘xc5 ♗a7 44 ♘d7+ ♔g5 45 h4+ ♔h5 46 ♖b7 ♖c2 47 ♖xa7 ♖xb2 48 ♘xe5 ♖xb4 49 ♖xg7 is decisive.

43 ♘c5 c3 *(D)*

1-0



White can win with 44 ♗c1 ♘d4 45 ♘d7+ ♔e7 (if 45...♔f7, 46 ♖xb8 ♖xb8 47 ♘xb8 ♘b3 48 ♗a3 c2 49 ♘c6 etc.) 46 ♘xb8 ♘b3 47 ♖b7+ ♔d8 48 ♖d7+ ♔e8 49 ♖xg7!.

Game 52

Fischer – Rossolimo [USA]

USA Ch 1965/6

French Defence

Peekaboo strategy

The MacCutcheon Variation gives rise to unusual positions where White is frequently obliged to forfeit the privilege of castling in order to try to wrest an advantage. After some slight but instructive opening inexactitudes on both sides, Rossolimo appears to achieve equality. Indeed, he is constantly on the brink of crashing through with a counter-attack against White's vulnerable king, although his own monarch is also stranded in the centre. After 13...f5, which shores up his fortress, it's not clear just whose attack will come first.

In a theoretically important formation—a logical offshoot of this variation—Fischer unearths two fine moves (17 ♗b5+ and 19 ♘g1) to sustain his flagging initiative. Still, he is forced to wage a running battle, no sooner landing a blow than having to duck. Consequently, the outcome is in doubt until the very last punch.

The MacCutcheon Variation, giving rise to immediate complications. 4...♗e7 and 4...dxe4 are tamer.

5 e5 h6

6 ♗d2

6 exf6 hxg5 7 fxg7 ♖g8 leads to nothing.

6 ... ♗xc3

7 bxc3

Against Petrosian, at Curaçao Ct 1962, I tried the ridiculous 7 ♗xc3? ♘e4 8 ♗a5?? (if 8 ♗b4 c5 9 dxc5, then 9...♘xf2! 10 ♔xf2 ♕h4+) 8...0-0 (weaker is 8...b6 9 ♗b4 c5 10 ♗a3 cxd4 11 ♕xd4 ♘c6 12 ♗b5) 9 ♗d3 ♘c6 10 ♗c3 ♘xc3 11 bxc3 f6 and Black already had the initiative.

7 ... ♘e4

8 ♕g4 g6

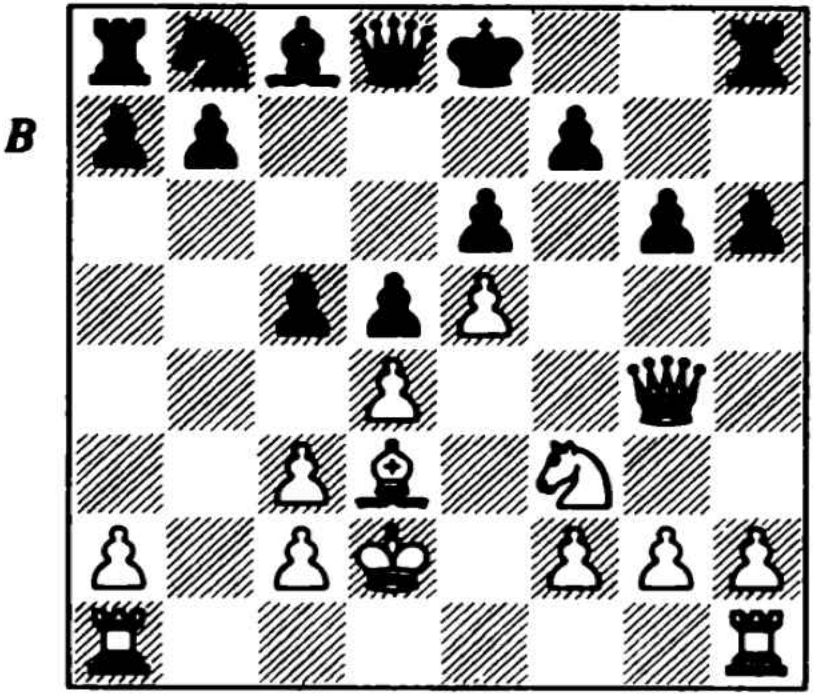
More risky is 8...♔f8 9 h4 c5 10 ♖h3.

9 ♗d3 ♘xd2

10 ♔xd2 c5

Producing a position well-known to theory, but never completely worked out. Not 10...♕g5+ 11 ♕xg5 hxg5 12 g4!.

11 ♘f3 *(D)*



11 ... ♘c6

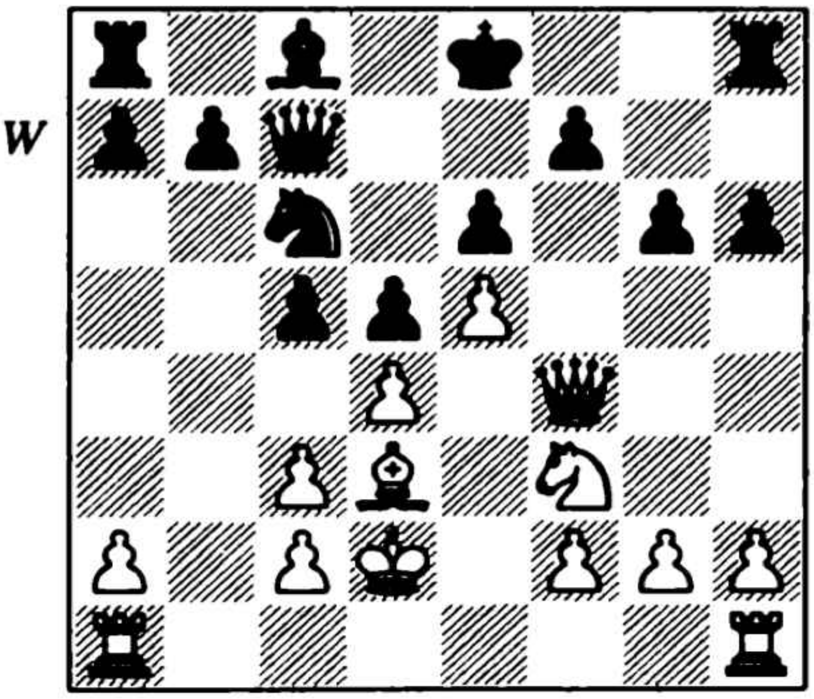
According to *Modern Chess Openings*, 11...♕c7 is more accurate, the point being that 12 ♕f4 can be met by 12...f5!. 11...♗d7 12 dxc5 deserves testing.

12 ♕f4

12 ♖ab1 is possibly better, restraining the development of Black's queenside.

12 ... ♕c7 *(D)*

Instead, 12...g5 13 ♕f6! ♕xf6 14 exf6 g4 15 ♘e5 cxd4 16 cxd4 ♘xd4 17 h3 gives White a better ending, but the natural 12...♕a5 is better, e.g. 13 ♖ab1 (after 13 ♖hb1 b6 14 a4 ♗a6 15 ♗b5 ♖c8 16 dxc5 bxc5 17 ♗xc6+ ♖xc6 18 ♖b8+ ♖c8 Black holds) 13...b6 14 dxc5 ♕xc5 15 ♘d4 ♘xd4 16 cxd4 ♕a5+ with an equal position.



13 h4

Sharper is 13 ♕f6! ♖g8 14 h4 and if 14...♕a5 (14...h5 looks practically forced), 15 h5! gxh5 16 ♖xh5 cxd4

17 ♖ah1 yielding good attacking prospects.

13 ... f5!

Re-establishing parity.

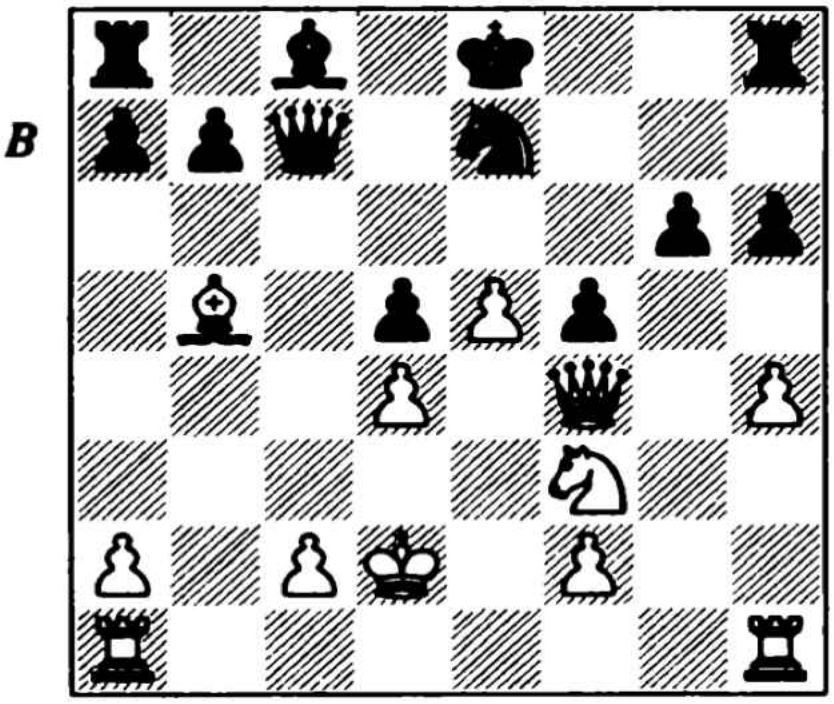
14 g4 cxd4

15 cxd4 ♘e7?

After the game Rossolimo suggested 15...♗d7, but White keeps the better of it after 16 gxf5 gxf5 (if 16...exf5, 17 ♕g3 ♘e7 18 e6! ♕a5+ 19 c3 ♗xe6 20 ♖he1 gives a powerful attack) 17 ♖hg1 0-0-0 18 ♖g6. At least Black's king reaches safety in this line.

16 gxf5 exf5

17 ♗b5+! *(D)*



17 ... ♔f8?

On 17...♘c6 (if 17...♗d7, then 18 ♗xd7+ ♕xd7 19 e6!) 18 ♗xc6+ bxc6 (18...♕xc6 is again met by 19 e6! ♗xe6 20 ♘e5 ♕d6 21 ♘xg6 ♕xf4+ 22 ♘xf4 and the knight beats the bishop in the ending) 19 ♖hg1, etc.

Black's best chance, however, is to try to reach sanctuary with 17...♔d8! 18 ♗d3 ♗e6. White undoubtedly has the initiative, but it's hard to get at the king.

18 ♗d3

Mission accomplished—Black's king is pinioned to the kingside.

18 ... ♗e6

19 ♘g1!

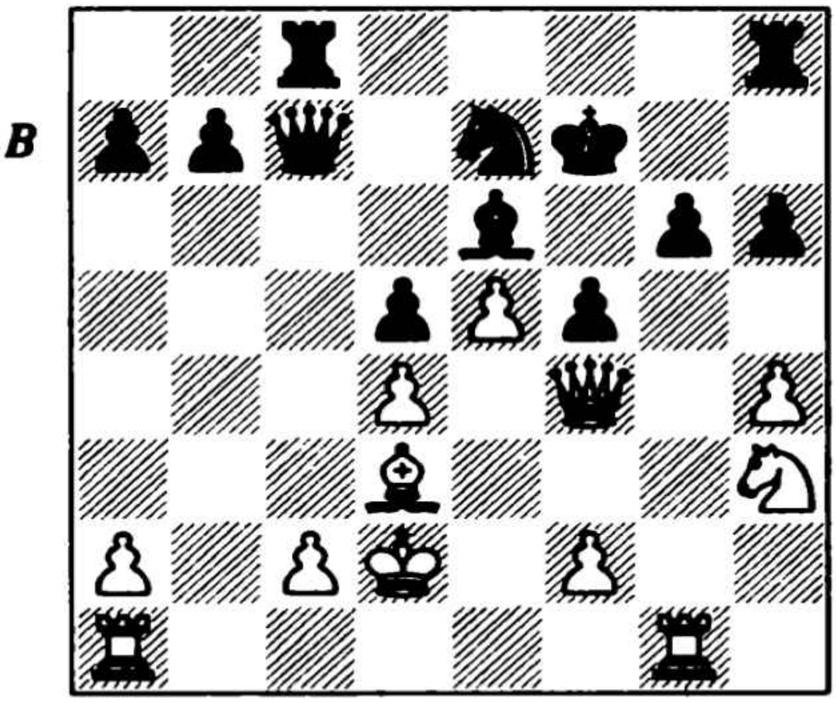
The key move. This knight is headed for f4 where it can exert maximum pressure on the g-pawn.

19 ... ♔f7

20 ♘h3 ♖ac8!?

Quite rightly, Rossolimo prefers to defend actively. After 20...♖ag8 White eventually triples on the g-file (bringing his knight to f4) with a crushing bind.

21 ♖hg1 *(D)*



21 ... b6

This takes a5 away from the queen, eliminating any possible defences there with check.

However, Black also loses after 21...♕c3+ 22 ♔e3 ♘c6 23 ♖ab1 ♘b4 24 ♖xb4! ♕xb4 25 h5 ♖cg8 26 hxg6+ ♜xg6 27 ♜xg6 ♛e1+ 28 ♔f3 ♔xg6 29 ♛h4! ♛d1+ 30 ♔g2 ♜g8 31 ♔h2!.

22 h5! ♛c3+
23 ♔e2 ♘c6

On 23...♜cg8 (if 23...g5, then 24 ♘xg5+! hxg5 25 ♛xg5 ♔e8 26 ♛f6 ♔d7 27 ♗b5+! ♜c6 28 ♛xh8 ♛xc2+ 29 ♔f1 wins), the continuation 24 hxg6+ ♜xg6 (if 24...♘xg6, 25 ♛f3) 25 ♛h4 is decisive.

24 hxg6+ ♔g7

No better is 24...♔e7 25 ♛h4+ ♔d7 26 ♜ad1! ♛xd4 (26...♘xd4+? 27 ♛xd4!) 27 ♘f4!.

25 ♜ad1! ♘xd4+

25...♛xd4 26 ♔f1! ♛xe5 27 ♜e1 ♛xf4 28 ♘xf4 ♗d7 29 ♘h5+ wins.

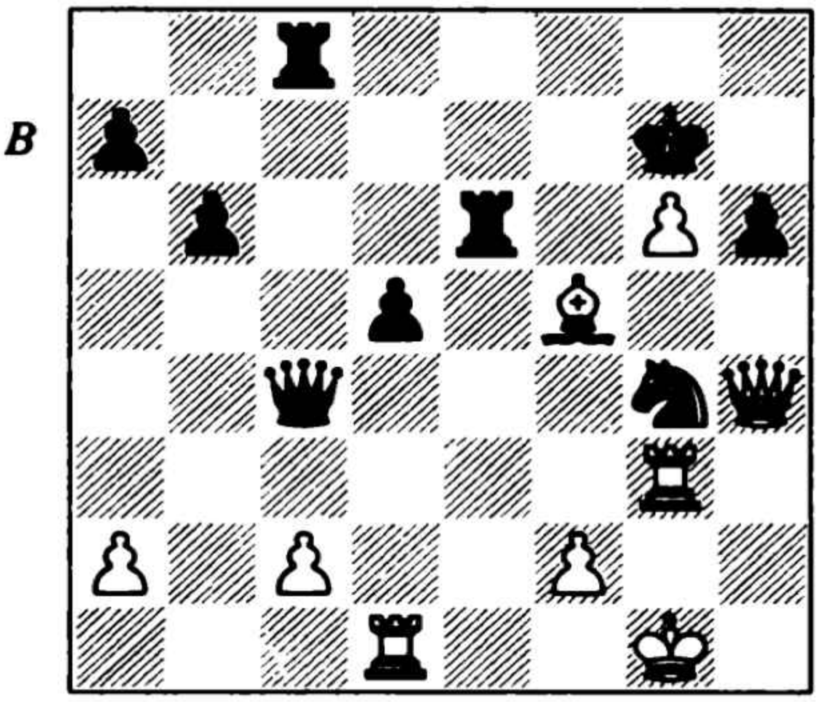
26 ♔f1 ♜he8
27 ♜g3

Overprotecting the bishop. After the hasty 27 ♛h4 ♘f3! 28 ♛f6+ ♔g8 29 ♗xf5 ♘h2+ 30 ♔g2 ♛f3+ 31 ♔xh2 ♛xf5 Black holds!

27 ... ♘c6
28 ♛h4 ♘xe5

After 28...♛xe5, 29 ♘f4 contain too many threats.

29 ♘f4 ♘g4
30 ♘xe6+! ♜xe6
31 ♗xf5 ♛c4+
32 ♔g1! *(D)* **1-0**



No credit for other moves!

If 32...♘xf2, 33 ♛xc4 ♜xc4 34 ♔xf2 ♜f4+ 35 ♜f3, etc.

A hard-fought game!

Game 53

Portisch [Hungary] – **Fischer**

Santa Monica 1966

Nimzo-Indian Defence

Black magic

Here is one of the few instances when Fischer does not employ the fianchetto of his king's bishop as a defence to 1 d4.

By ignoring White's gambit on move nine he lays the groundwork for the positional trap (11...♛d7) into which Portisch falls (14 ♛xa8). Normally, tw rooks for the queen is a good trade—better than good when it produces a setting in which the scope and power of the rooks may be formidable. But Portisch's judgement is faulty; he fails to take into account the weakness of his pawns. This is one of the rare occasions when the queen can run rampant, and she does.

Still, the question remains: how did Black manage to weave his spell? To achieve a winning endgame within fifteen moves, against a specialist with White in this opening, is an almost unheard-of feat.

1 d4 ♘f6

2 c4 e6!

To throw White off balance. I felt Portisch was just too well-versed in the King's Indian.

3 ♘c3 ♗b4

4 e3

This has been fashionable for some time. Spassky's offbeat 4 ♗g5 leads to no advantage after 4...h6 5 ♗h4 c5 6 d5 d6 7 e3 ♗xc3+! 8 bxc3 e5, etc. The two knights are better than the bishops in such closed formations.

4 ... b6!

Other moves have been analysed to death.

5 ♘e2

Reshevsky-Fischer US Ch 1966 continued 5 ♗d3 ♗b7 6 ♘f3 0-0 (sharper is 6...♘e4! 7 0-0 f5 [or 7...♘xc3! 8 bxc3 ♗xc3 9 ♖b1 ♘c6! and White hasn't got enough for his pawn] 8 ♗xe4 fxe4 9 ♘d2 ♗xc3 10 bxc3 0-0 11 ♕g4 ♖f5! = Gligorić-Larsen, Havana 1967; then not 12 ♘xe4? h5) 7 0-0 ♗xc3 (7...d5 is an alternative) 8 bxc3 ♗e4 9 ♕c2 and now 9...♗xf3! (instead of 9...♗xd3) 10 gxf3 c5 would lead to an exciting positional struggle—two knights vs. two bishops, but White's pawn formation is shaky.

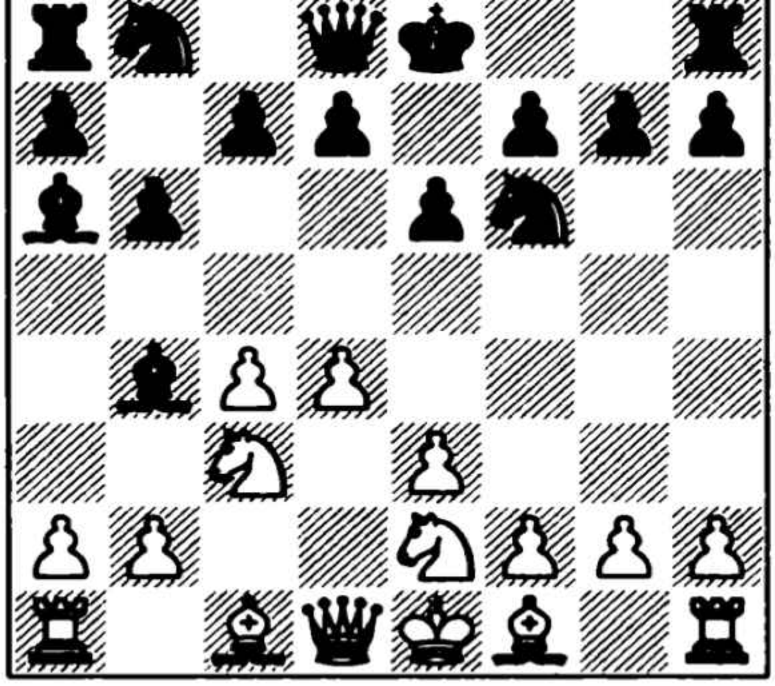
5 ... ♗a6 *(D)*

Bronstein's active idea, trying to profit from White's last move. I had adopted it with success in the 1966 US Ch.

5...♘e4!? is a very interesting try. Taimanov-Levin, USSR Ch 1967 continued 6 ♕c2 ♗b7 7 f3 (7 a3 is better) and now instead of 7...♗xc3+ (as in the game), 7...♘xc3! 8 ♘xc3 (8 bxc3 ♗d6! 9 e4 ♘c6 gives Black good play against White's doubled c-pawn) 8...♕h4+ 9 ♕f2 ♗xc3+ 10 bxc3 ♕xf2+ 11 ♔xf2 ♗a6! threatening ...♘c6-a5 with at least equality.

6 ♘g3

Somewhat inconsistent. The point of 5 ♘e2 is to play 6 a3 so that after 6...♗xc3+ (6...♗e7 7 ♘f4 d5 8 cxd5 ♗xf1 9 ♔xf1 exd5 10 g4! gives White a slight edge, as was demonstrated in the 1954 Botvinnik-Smyslov match) 7 ♘xc3 White can avoid doubling his c-pawn. After 7...d5 8



b3 0-0 9 a4 ♘c6 I reached this position, as Black, twice in the 1966 US Ch. Addison played 10 ♗b2? and got the worse of it after 10...dxc4 11 bxc4 ♘a5 12 ♘b5 c6 13 ♘a3 ♕e7! 14 ♕c2 c5 15 ♗e2 (finally) 15...cxd4 16 exd4 ♖fc8 17 0-0 ♖c6! 18 ♗f3 ♘d5 and White's c-pawn falls. Evans chose 10 ♗e2 dxc4 11 ♗a3! ♖e8 12 b4 ♘e7 13 0-0? (13 b5 ♗b7 14 0-0 permits White to regain his pawn with a tiny pull) 13...♘ed5 14 ♖c1 c6! 15 ♗f3 b5 16 a5 ♕c7 17 ♕c2 ♖ad8 18 ♖fd1 ♗b7 19 ♖d2 ♘xc3 20 ♕xc3 c5! 21 dxc5 ♗xf3 22 gxf3 ♖xd2 23 ♕xd2 ♖d8 24 ♕e1 ♖d3 25 ♗b2 ♘d5 and White soon collapsed.

6 ... ♗xc3+!

Inferior is 6...0-0 (not 6...d5?? 7 ♕a4+) 7 e4 ♘c6 (White keeps his initiative after 7...c5 8 d5 d6 9 ♗e2 exd5 10 exd5 ♗xc3+ 11 bxc3 ♘bd7 12 0-0 ♖e8 13 ♕a4 etc. Portisch-Reshevsky, Santa Monica 1966) 8 ♗d3! d5 (8...♘xd4? 9 ♕a4 wins a piece) 9 cxd5 ♗xd3 10 ♕xd3 exd5 11 e5 ♘e4 12 a3! with a clear plus; Portisch-Spassky, Moscow 1967.

7 bxc3 d5

8 ♕f3

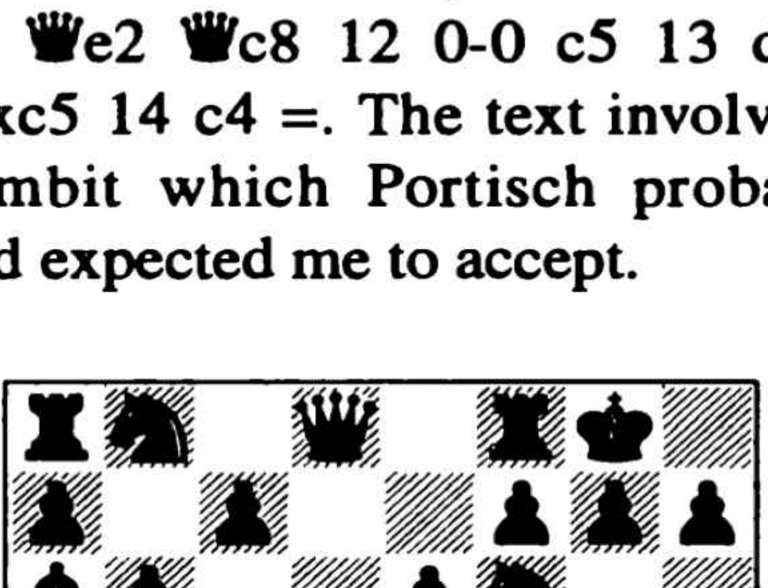
The whole idea is dubious. No better is 8 ♗a3 dxc4! 9 ♕f3 ♕d5 10 e4 ♕c6 and White hasn't got enough for the pawn.

Simply 8 cxd5 leads to level play. It is White's insistence on seeking the initiative that lands him in trouble.

8 ... 0-0

9 e4!? *(D)*

Right is 9 cxd5 exd5 (but not 9...♗xf1? 10 dxe6!) 10 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 11 ♕e2 ♕c8 12 0-0 c5 13 dxc5 ♘xc5 14 c4 =. The text involves a gambit which Portisch probably had expected me to accept.



9 ... dxe4!

An improvement over 9...dxc4!? which I had played against Saidy in the 1966 US Ch: 10 ♗g5 h6 11 ♗d2? (right is 11 h4! ♗b7! 12 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 13 ♕xf6 gxf6 14 ♗xc4. Or

White might try to continue the attack with 12 ♘h5!? ♘bd7!, but not 12...hxg5? when 13 hxg5 ♘xe4 14 ♘f6+!! wins—Spassky) 11...♘bd7 12 e5 ♘d5 13 ♘f5 (if 13 ♘h5 ♕h4!) 13...exf5 14 ♕xd5 ♖e8! 15 ♗xc4 (or 15 0-0-0 c5) 15...♘xe5! 16 ♕xd8 ♘xc4+ 17 ♕xe8+ ♖xe8+ 18 ♔d1 ♘xd2 19 ♔xd2 ♖e2+ with an easily won endgame.

10 ♘xe4 ♘xe4

11 ♕xe4 ♕d7!!

The finest move in the game, far superior to the 'natural' 11...♘d7 12 ♗d3 ♘f6 13 ♕h4 with two bishops and a beautiful development despite the doubled pawns.

Back can well afford to give up two rooks for a queen (after 12 ♕xa8? ♘c6) as will soon become apparent. The text prepares ...♘c6-a5 hitting the 'weakling', as Alekhine used to call that kind of a target.

12 ♗a3

White gets the worst of it after 12 ♗d3 f5 13 ♕e2 ♘c6, etc. Still, this was a prudent choice.

12 ... ♖e8 *(D)*

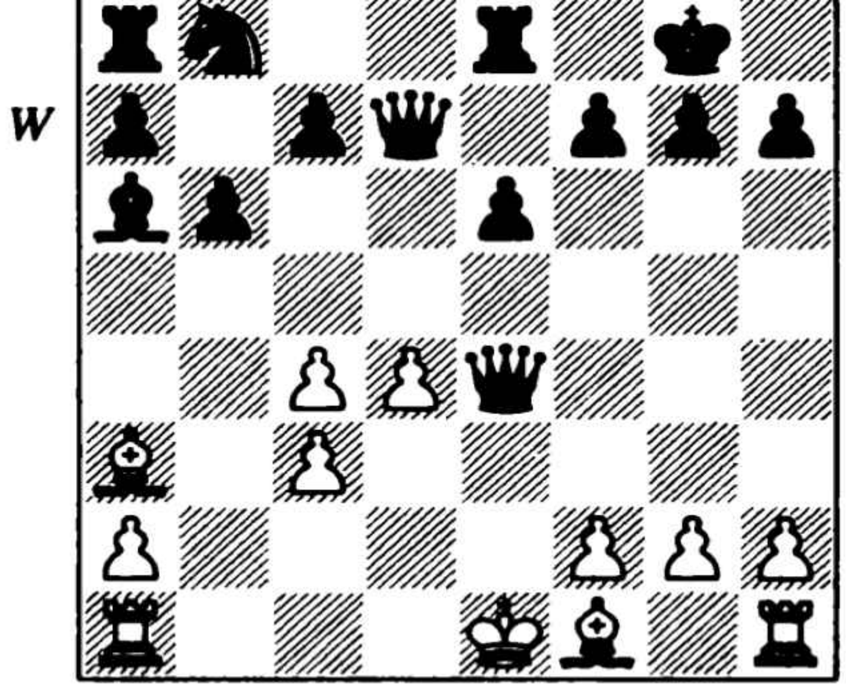
13 ♗d3

13 0-0-0 seems more consistent, making a real fight of it. Such double-edged lines, however, are not to Portisch's taste.

13 ... f5

14 ♕xa8?

Very bad judgement. White should resist temptation and try to hold on with the modest 14 ♕e2. His doubled c-pawn, though weak, is not fatal. As the game goes, however, it is.



14 ... ♘c6

15 ♕xe8+ ♕xe8

16 0-0 ♘a5

17 ♖ae1 ♗xc4

Too routine. 17...♕a4! is crushing, e.g. 18 ♗b4 (if 18 ♗c1 ♗xc4 19 ♗xc4 ♕xc4 Black should win easily) 18...♗xc4 19 ♗xc4 ♘xc4 20 ♖xe6 a5 21 ♗e7 ♘d2! 22 ♖fe1 ♘e4 23 f3 ♕xa2! is curtains.

18 ♗xc4

18 ♗xf5? loses to 18...♕a4.

18 ... ♘xc4

19 ♗c1 c5

20 dxc5

White cannot hold the ending. If 20 d5?, then simply 20...e5.

20 ... bxc5

21 ♗f4 h6!

Preparing to expand on the kingside, which cannot be prevented.

22 ♖e2

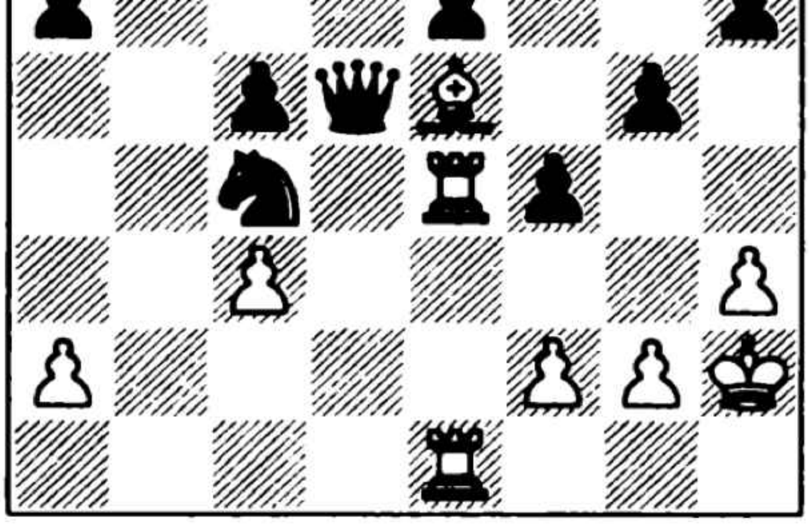
After 22 h4 e5! 23 ♗xe5 ♘xe5 24 f4 ♘f3+! 25 gxf3 ♕a4 White's pawns are too loose.

On 24 f4, 24...♘d2! 26 ♖fe1 ♘e4 ties White up.

24 ... ♔f7
25 h3 f4
26 ♔h2 a6

Taking care of details, so that the pawn will not be within the bishop's reach after 25...♕d5 26 ♗b8, etc.

27 ♖e4 ♕d5! *(D)*



The queen is boss.

Black's superiority is obvious. He has some minor threats, and a major one which cannot be met. To the surprise of no one, *Sovietski Sport*, a Soviet newspaper, reported that Portisch had blundered and thrown away a perfectly even endgame.

28 h4

After the comparatively better 28 ♖4e2 Black wins more slowly with 28...f3! 29 gxf3 (or 29 ♖e4 fxg2 followed by ...♘d2 wins) 29...♘d2, and so on.

28 ... ♘e3!

Wins the exchange, as 29 f3 f against 29...♕d2 30 ♖g1 ♕f2.

29 ♖1xe3 fxe3
30 ♖xe3 ♕xa2
31 ♖f3+ ♔e8
32 ♗g7 ♕c4
33 hxg5 hxg5
34 ♖f8+

A check before dying.

34 ... ♔d7
35 ♖a8 ♔c6

0-1

The ominous presence of Blac a-pawn is the deciding factor.

Game 54

Fischer – Najdorf [Argentina]

Santa Monica 1966

Sicilian Defence

Najdorf's night off from the Najdorf

This game follows a loss (with Black) to Najdorf earlier in the tourname Here, Najdorf adopts the Sicilian but not his Variation—perhaps becaus

had lost with it previously (see Game 40). White soon launches a sharp line, a curious violation of principle involving three consecutive bishop sorties before his other men have been developed. In relatively uncharted terrain, both players miss their way on move twelve. It then becomes a question of whether Najdorf's doubled centre pawns are a mass or a mess. Fischer proceeds to exploit his slight advantage with restraint, gradually building up pressure against Black's uncastled king. At the right moment he offers a stunning pawn sacrifice (26 c5). Najdorf is compelled to decline, whereupon he lands in a hopeless endgame.

This forceful and resourceful performance typified Fischer's surge throughout the last half of the 2nd Piatagorsky cup.

1 e4 c5
2 ♘f3 ♘c6

Najdorf avoids the Najdorf Variation.

3 d4 cxd4
4 ♘xd4 e6

4...♘f6 obliges 5 ♘c3 which precludes the Maroczy Bind by c4. Ever since ways of combating the 'Bind' have been found, it has become almost an obsession to abstain from 4...♘f6, although the most that can be said for other moves is that some of them may be as good.

5 ♘b5

Alekhine was of the opinion that 5 c4 is best, but it has since been discovered that White cannot maintain any advantage after 5...♘f6 6 ♘c3 ♗b4, etc.

5 ... d6
6 ♗f4!?

Sharpest. Objectively speaking, it is probably best to establish an immediate Maroczy Bind with 6 c4.

After 6...♘e5!?, Bronstein's idea 7 ♘1a3! is best, but not Euwe's suggestion to win a pawn by 7 ♕d4 a6 8 ♘xd6+?? ♗xd6 9 ♗xe5 because of 9...♕a5+! (Zuckerman).

7 ♗e3 ♘f6

Black can avoid the doubling of his pawns by 7...a6 8 ♘5c3 ♘f6 9 ♗g5 ♗e7. However, Najdorf may have been worried about 9 ♗c4!. Fischer-Badilles, Manila 1967, then continued: 9...♗e7 10 ♘d5! ♘xd5 11 ♗xd5 0-0 12 ♘c3 with absolute control of d5. After the text, 8 ♗c4 is met simply by 8...♗e6! (but not 8...♘xe4?? 9 ♕d5 ♗e6 10 ♕xe4 d5 11 ♗xd5! and wins) 9 ♗xe6 fxe6 10 c4! ♗e7 = (not 10...♘xe4? 11 ♕g4).

8 ♗g5!? *(D)*

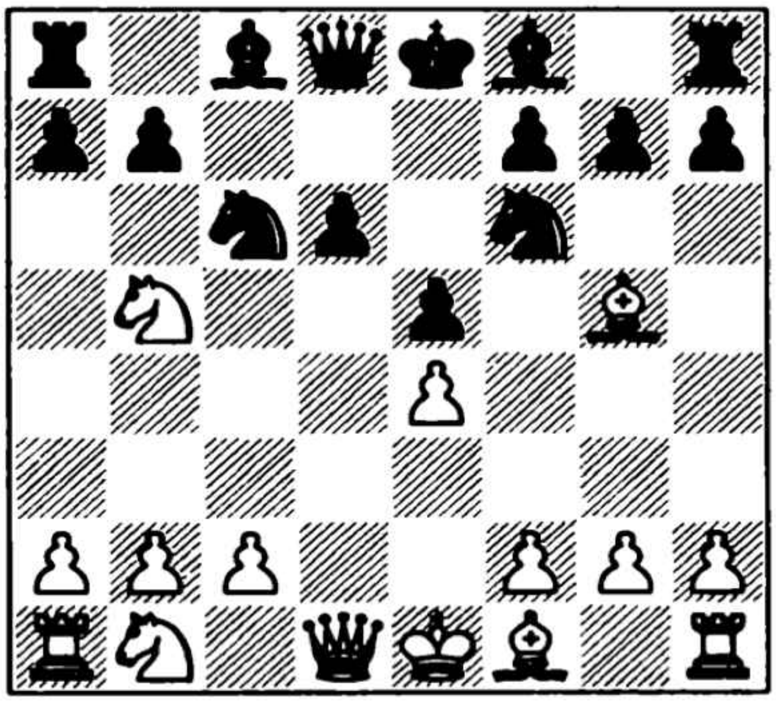
Another of Bronstein's ideas. The customary line was 8 ♘1c3; after 8...a6 9 ♘a3 Black has three moves:

a) 9...b5 10 ♘d5 ♘xd5 (10...♖b8 11 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 12 ♘b1! leads to an edge for White) 11 exd5 ♘e7 12 c4

b) Simagin gives 9...♗e6 10 ♘d5 ♗xd5! 11 exd5 ♘e7 12 c4 ♘f5 with harmonious development for all of Black's pieces. Or 10 ♘c4 b5 11 ♘b6 ♖b8 12 ♘bd5 ♗xd5 13 exd5 ♘e7 with a good game. But 13 ♘xd5!? (instead of 13 exd5) initiates a promising gambit (13...♘xe4 14 ♕f3 ♘c5 15 0-0-0).

c) Best is 9...♖b8! 10 ♗g5 b5 = Aronin-Taimanov, USSR Ch 1962. 11 ♘d5 is met by 11...♕a5+; forcing 12 ♗d2, then 12...♕d8 and White has made no progress. After 13 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 14 ♘b1 b4! White must regroup his forces.

B



The third consecutive bishop sortie is well-motivated since White is threatening to double Black's f-pawn.

8 ... ♗e6?

Also weak is 8...a6 9 ♗xf6 gxf6 10 ♘5c3 f5? 11 ♕h5! ♘d4 12 ♗c4 ♕c7 13 ♘d2 ♘xc2+ 14 ♔e2 ♘xa1 (Bronstein-Polugaevsky, USSR Ch 1964) and now simply 15 ♖xa1! must win out. Another try is 11...♗g7!? (instead of 11...♘d4) 12 ♗c4 0-0 13 exf5 ♘d4 14 ♗d3 ♖e8 15 ♗e4! (not 15 f6? as in Estrin-Cherepkov, Leningrad 1964). For instance, 15...d5 16 ♘xd5 ♗xf5 17 ♗xf5 ♕xd5 18 ♘c3 ♕xg2? 19 ♗e4 ♘xc2+ 20 ♔e2 ♘d4+ 21 ♔e3 etc.

But Black could equalise immediately with 8...♕a5+! 9 ♕d2 (or 9 ♗d2 ♕d8 draws) 9...♘xe4 10 ♕xa5 ♘xa5 11 ♗e3 (R. Byrne suggests 11 ♘c7+? ♔d7 12 ♘xa8 ♘xg5 13 ♗b5+ but after 13...♔d8! 14 ♘c3 ♗d7 15 0-0-0 ♗e7 White's straying knight is soon lost) 11...♔d7 12 ♘xa7 d5, etc.

9 ♘1c3

After 9 c4 h6! 10 ♗xf6 gxf6 Black's position is excellent.

9 ... a6
10 ♗xf6 gxf6
11 ♘a3 ♘d4

Other possibilities (all favouring White) are:

a) 11...b5 12 ♘d5!.

b) 11...♗e7 12 ♗c4!.

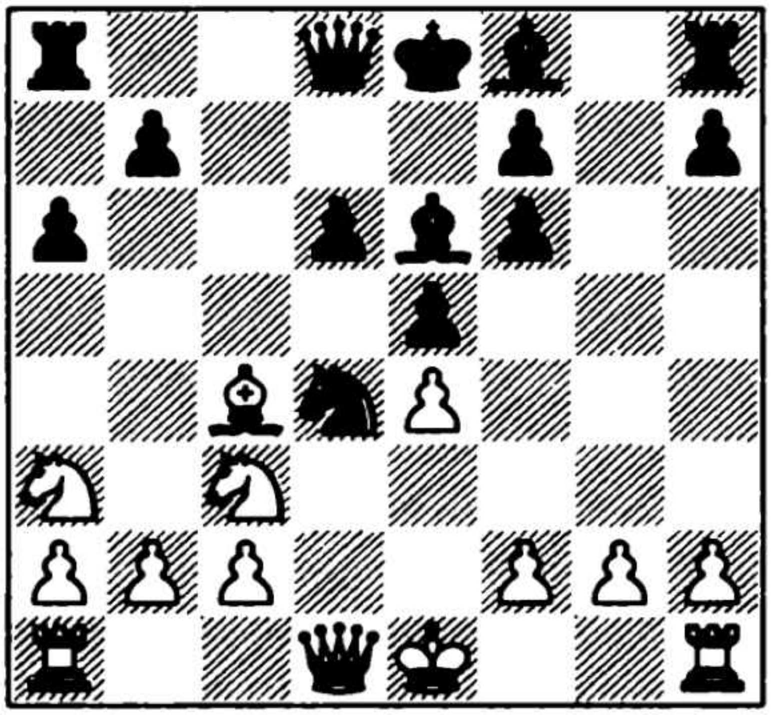
c) 11...f5? 12 ♗c4 ♗xc4 13 ♘xc4 fxe4 14 ♘xe4 d5 15 ♕xd5!.

12 ♗c4? *(D)*

Correct is 12 ♘c4 and after 12...♖c8 13 ♘e3 ♗h6 (if 13...♕b6 simply 14 ♖b1) 14 ♗d3 ♖g8, 15 ♕h5! snuffs out Black's initiative.

12 ... b5

Sharper is 12...d5! 13 ♘xd5 (if 13 exd5 ♗xa3 14 dxe6 ♕a5) 13...♗xa3 14 bxa3 ♕a5+ 15 ♔f1 (or 15 c3



♗xd5 16 ♗xd5 ♕xc3+ 17 ♔f1 ♖c8! with advantage) 15...0-0-0 with active play, e.g. if 16 c3 then 16...♘b5.

13 ♗xe6

Of course not the tempting 13 ♗d5? b4.

13 ... fxe6

All in all this exchange benefits Black since it enables him to protect his weak squares (d5 and f5). However if (as in the game) his central pawn mass can be restrained, then it becomes merely a fixed target subject to constant pressure.

14 ♘e2 ♘c6

Black should get some scope for his pieces by 14...♘xe2! 15 ♕xe2 d5. The check looming on h5 is not to be feared.

15 ♘g3

15 c4 at once is met by 15...♕a5+.

15 ... ♕d7?

Dr. Kmoch recommends 15...d5!. Or 15...♕a5+! 16 c3 b4 and if 17 ♘c4 ♕c5.

16 c4 ♘d4

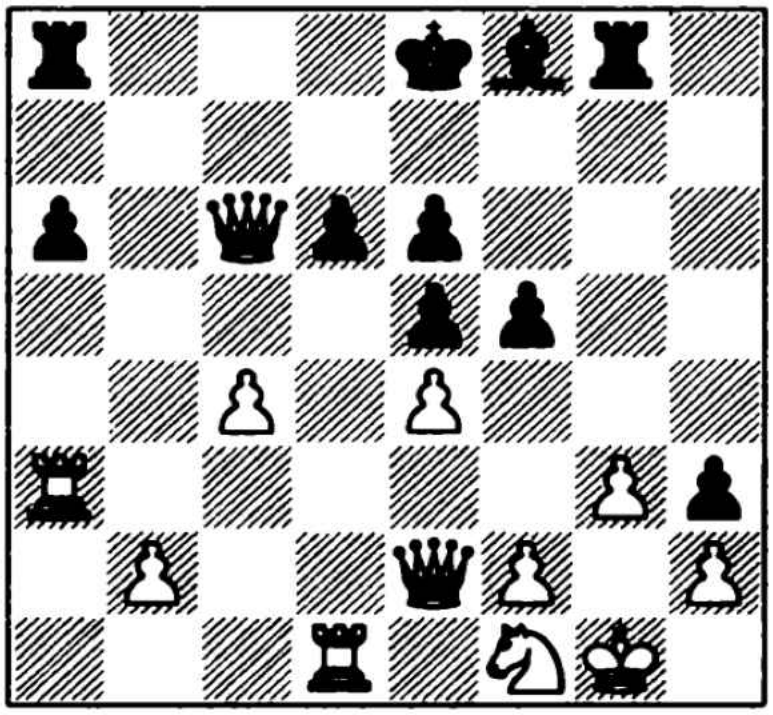
"Castling queenside is a risk Black's insurance company would not permit him to take." (R. Byrne)

The text later enables White to use this b-pawn to pry open the a-file (after a3). Better is 17...♗g7.

18 ♘c2 ♘xc2
19 ♕xc2 h5
20 ♖fd1 h4
21 ♘f1 ♖g8?

Better is 21...h3 22 g3 ♕c6 with reasonable play.

22 a3! h3
23 g3 bxa3
24 ♖xa3 ♕c6
25 ♕e2! f5 *(D)*



Hoping to trade his h-pawn for the e-pawn in the event of 26 ♕h5+. But White now is ready to exploit Black's poor development.

26 c5!

More than a glancing blow. Black can know nothing about the imminent destruction of his compact mass of centre pawns.

26...dxc5 (if 26...♕xc5 27 ♕h5+ followed by exf5, etc.) 27 ♕h5+ ♔e7 28 ♖ad3 fxe4 29 ♖3d2 is quite hopeless for Black.

27 ♕xe4 fxe4
28 cxd6

Black's game is in ruins—note his pathetic triplets on the e-file. The rest is technique.

28 ... ♗h6

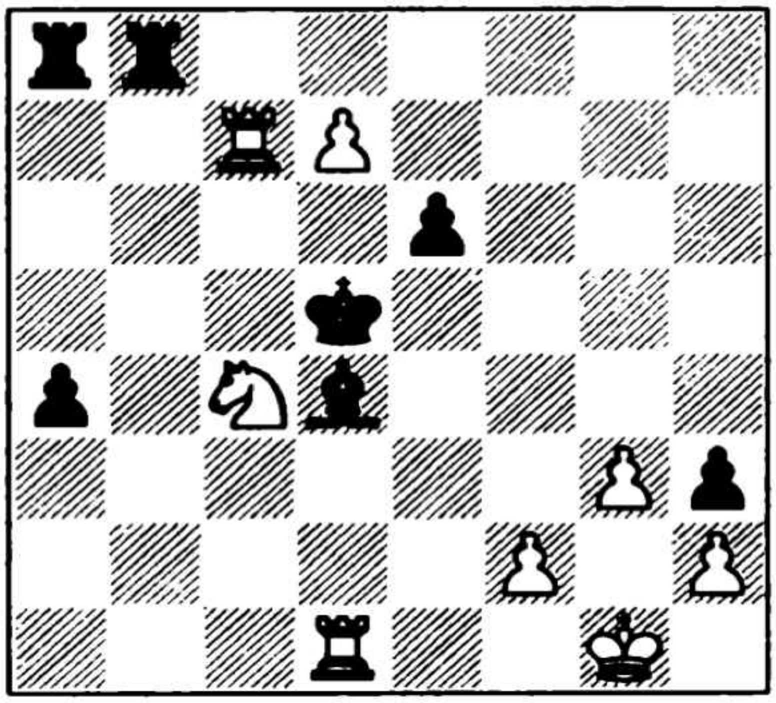
To prevent ♘e3-c4.

29 ♖a5 ♔d7
30 ♖xe5 ♗g7
31 ♖xe4 ♗xb2
32 ♘e3 a5

A last gasp. Different people feel differently about resigning.

33 ♘c4 ♖gb8
34 ♖h4 ♔c6
35 ♖h7 ♗d4
36 ♖c7+ ♔d5
37 d7 a4 *(D)*

W



38 ♘b6+

Najdorf was probably hoping for 38 ♖c8! ♖xc8 39 ♘b6+ ♔c5 40 dxc8♕+? ♖xc8 41 ♘xc8 a3 with some practical chances. But we both overlooked the neat *zwischenzug* 40 ♖c1+! ♔xb6 41 ♖xc8! breaking all further resistance.

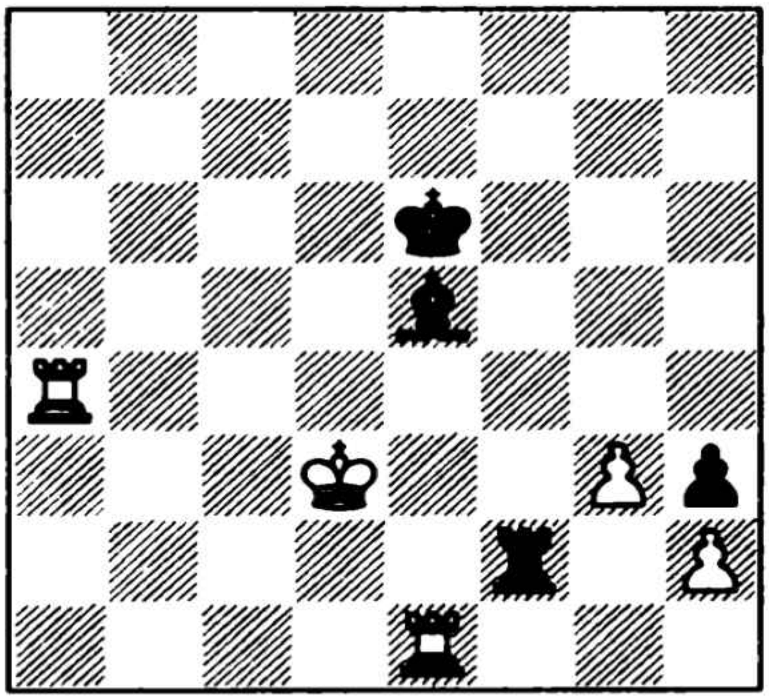
The text is good enough, but prolongs the game.

38 ... ♖xb6
39 ♖c8

The point: on 39...♖bb8 the pawn queens with check.

39 ... ♖d6
40 ♖xa8 ♖xd7
41 ♖xa4 e5
42 ♔f1 ♖b7
43 f4! ♔e6
44 fxe5 ♖f7+
45 ♔e2 ♖f2+
46 ♔d3 ♗xe5
47 ♖e1! *(D)* **1-0**

B



After 47...♖f5 48 ♖a5 (win by pin!) 48...♔f6 49 ♖1xe5 ♖xe5 50 ♖xe5 ♔xe5 51 ♔e3 ♔f5 52 ♔d4! (but not 52 ♔f3 ♔g5 53 g4?? ♔h4! and draws) 52...♔g5 53 ♔e5 ♔g4 54 ♔e4 ♔g5 55 ♔f3 ♔f5 56 g4+ followed by ♔g3 wins.

Fischer – Bednarski [Poland]

Havana OL 1966

Sicilian Defence

The price of incaution

Once more Fischer rehabilitates his pet move (6 ♗c4) against his favourite Najdorf Variation, and it is remarkable that he should continue to win with such ease. In fact, his opponents do not seem to offer serious resistance. Young Bednarski apparently is caught napping, improvises, and loses in just 22 moves!

Seeking active counterplay, Bednarski blunders through bravado. He takes a tainted pawn (9...♘xe4) and impetuously pursues the attack only to find himself in an ambush which, ironically, he had helped to construct. By move 12 Fischer obtains a formation at which he had had success even as a child. Naturally he wins, but the economy with which he does so is delightful.

1	**e4**	**c5**
2	**♘f3**	**d6**
3	**d4**	**cxd4**
4	**♘xd4**	**♘f6**
5	**♘c3**	**a6**
6	**♗c4**	

Here we go again!

6 ... e6

Probably best. White's bishop is made to 'bite on granite'.

7 ♗b3 *(D)*

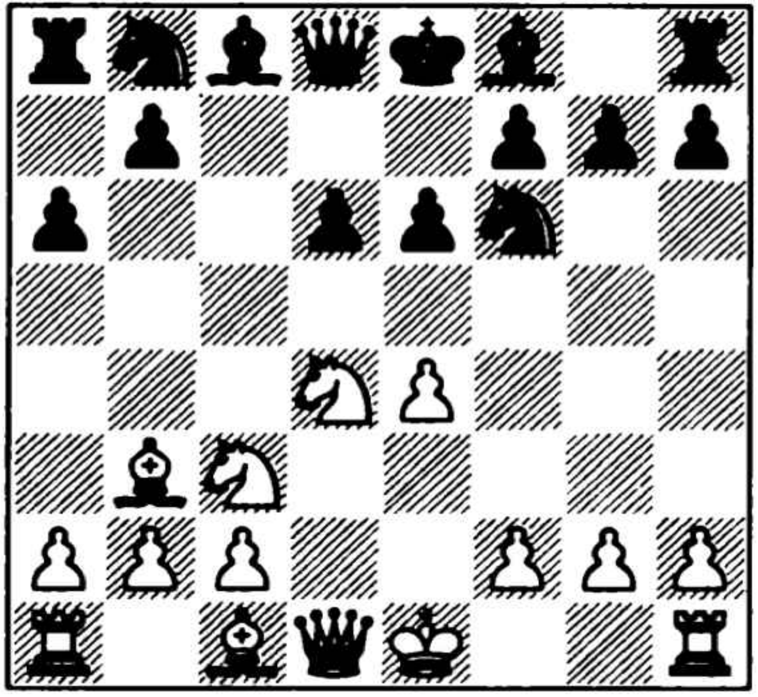
Bronstein's idea 7 a3 is too slow, e.g. Robatsch-Fischer, Havana 1965: 7...♗e7 8 ♗a2 0-0 9 0-0 b5 10 f4 ♗b7 11 f5 e5 (Black is healthy as long as White can't exploit his hole on d5) 12 ♘de2 ♘bd7 13 ♘g3 ♖c8 14 ♗e3 (if 14 ♗g5 ♖xc3! 15 bxc3 ♘xe4 with advantage—Gligorić) 14...♘b6 15 ♗xb6 ♕xb6+ 16 ♔h1 ♕e3! (to prevent ♘h5) with the better game for Black.

White would of course like to get in f4-f5 as swiftly as possible, but he must exercise some caution. The text is essentially a waiting move which narrows Black's options. After 7 f4 Black has the choice of 7...d5, 7...b5, or 7...♘xe4 8 ♘xe4 d5.

7 ... ♘bd7

In order to reach c5 with an attack on the bishop as well as the e-pawn. But 7...b5! is better (see Game 17). An example of static White play is

B



J.Garcia-Fischer, Havana OL 1966: 8 a3 ♗e7 9 ♗e3 0-0 10 0-0 ♗b7 11 f3 ♘bd7 12 ♕d2 (12 ♗xe6!? leads to rough equality) 12...♘e5 13 ♕f2 ♕c7 14 ♖ac1 ♔h8! 15 ♘ce2 ♖g8! 16 ♔h1 g5! 17 h3 ♖g6 18 ♘g3 ♖ag8 (White is curiously helpless against the threat of ...h5 and ...g4; his normal break with f4 is restrained by the silent bishop on b7) 19 ♘xe6? fxe6 20 ♗xe6 ♘xe4! 21 ♘xe4 ♖xe6 0-1.

After 7...b5 recent analysis indicates that Black's best plan is rapid development on the queenside: 8 f4 ♗b7 9 f5 e5 10 ♘de2 ♘bd7 11 ♗g5 ♗e7. Now on 12 ♘g3? (correct is 12 ♗xf6 ♘xf6 13 ♕d3 ♖c8 with even chances—Fischer-Zuckerman, US Ch 1966) 12...♖c8! 13 0-0 h5! White's in trouble, as indicated by the following examples:

a) 14 h4 b4 15 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 16 ♘d5 ♗xh4 17 ♘xh5!? ♕g5 18 f6 g6 19 ♘g7+ ♔d8 20 ♖f3 ♗g3 21 ♕d3 ♗h2+ 22 ♔f1 ♘c5 23 ♖h3!? ♖h4! 24 ♕f3 ♘xb3 25 axb3 ♖xh3 26 ♕xh3 ♗xd5 27 exd5 ♕xf6+ 28 ♔e1 ♕f4 and since there's nothing left but emptiness, 0-1; R. Byrne-Fischer, Sousse IZ 1967.

b) 14 ♗xf6 ♘xf6 15 ♘d5 h4 16 ♘xf6+ gxf6 17 ♘e2 ♗xe4 18 ♗d5 ♕b6+ 19 ♔h1 ♗xd5 20 ♕xd5 ♖xc2 21 ♕d3 ♕c6 22 ♖ac1 h3! 0-1 was Ciocaltea-Gheorghiu, Bucharest 1967.

8 f4! ♘c5

Too passive is 8...♗e7 9 ♕f3 0-0 10 g4. Bad is 8...b5 9 f5! e5 10 ♘c6! ♕c7 11 ♘b4! and White is ready to sit on Black once he occupies the hole on d5.

9 f5!

Thematic. Bednarski told me after the game he had reached this position before, as White, and he had continued 9 e5 dxe5 10 fxe5 ♘fd7 11 ♗f4 vs. Bogdanović, E. Germany 1964. Obviously that approach is too tame.

9 ... ♘fxe4!?

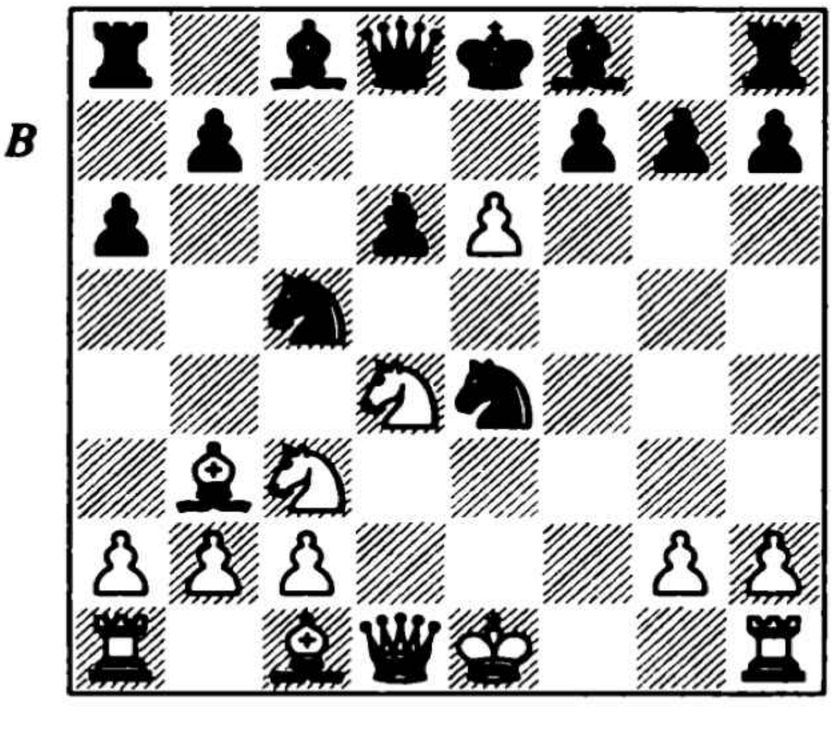
Playing with fire.

The question is whether 9...e5 is sufficient. Apparently not, after 10 ♘de2 ♘xb3 (not 10...♘cxe4? 11 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 12 ♕d5 ♘g5 13 h4) 11 axb3 h6 12 ♘g3 followed by ♘h5 with a bind; R. Byrne-Bogdanović, Sarajevo 1967.

9...♗e7 is steadier than the text (for 9...♘xb3 10 axb3 see note to White's 7th move in Game 58). But White stays on top after 10 ♕f3 0-0 11 ♗e3. Now on 11...d5, 12 exd5

♘xb3 13 ♘xb3! exf5 (if 13...♘xd5?, 14 0-0-0 wins a pawn) 14 0-0-0 etc.

10 fxe6! *(D)*



10 ... ♕h4+?

Tempting, but suicidal. Black had two better tries:

a) 10...♗xe6 11 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 12 ♘xe6 fxe6 (not 12...♕h4+ 13 g3 ♘xg3 when 14 ♗g5! ♕e4+ 15 ♔d2 ♘xh1 16 ♘c7+ ♔d7 17 ♘xa8 wins) 13 ♕g4 ♘c5 14 ♗e3! with a strong initiative.

b) 10...fxe6! 11 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 12 0-0 ♕e7! (weaker is 12...♘c5 13 ♕g4—if 13...♘xb3 14 axb3 e5, 15 ♕f3). White has good play for the pawn, but no forced win in view.

11 g3 ♘xg3

12 ♘f3!

This twist is well known: e.g. from the Vienna 1 e4 e5 2 ♘c3 ♘f6 3 f4 d5 4 fxe5 ♘xe4 5 d3 ♕h4+ 6 g3 ♘xg3 7 ♘f3, etc.

Only not 12 exf7+? ♔d8 13 ♘f3 ♕e7+!.

12 ... ♕h5

13 exf7+ ♔d8

14 ♖g1 ♘f5

15 ♘d5! ♕xf7

Black's attack has boomeranged. Now his king gets caught in a merciless crossfire.

On 15...h6, 16 ♘f4! picks off the queen. No better is 15...♘xb3 16 ♗g5+ ♔d7 (or 16...♗e7 17 ♘xe7! ♘xe7 18 ♕xd6+) 17 ♘e5+!.

16 ♗g5+ ♔e8

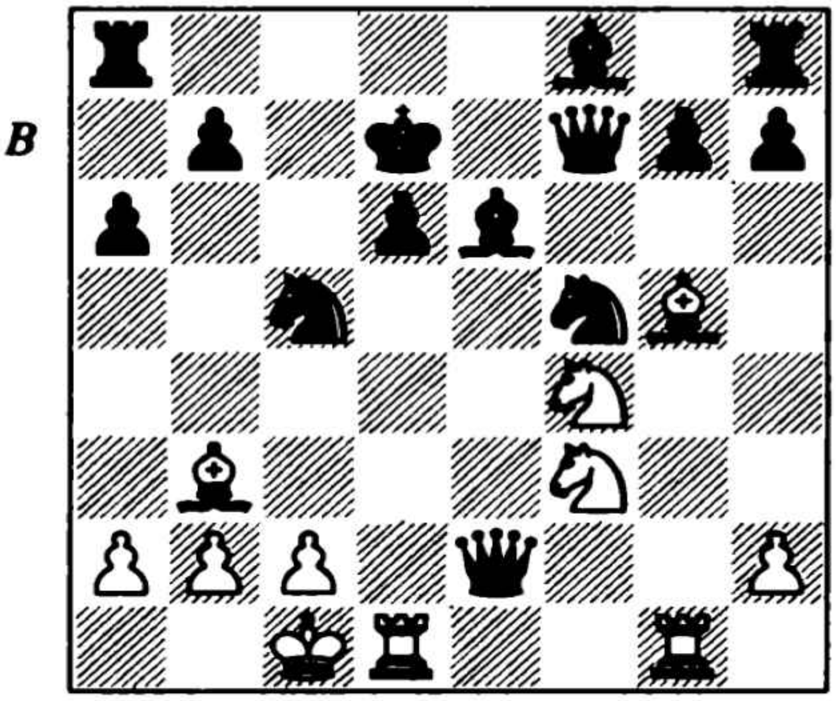
17 ♕e2+!

By now I was hunting for bigger game than the paltry win of a queen after 17 ♘f6+ gxf6 18 ♗xf7+.

17 ... ♗e6

18 ♘f4 ♔d7

19 0-0-0 *(D)*



One threat of course is 20 ♘e5+.

19 ... ♕e8

Black is helpless. After the alternative 19...♘xb3+ 20 axb3 ♕e8 21 ♖he1 ♗g8 22 ♕d3 it's also quits. The only way for Black to last is to give up his queen with 19...♗xb3 20 ♘e5+ ♔c7 21 ♘xf7 ♗xf7.

20 ♗xe6+ ♘xe6

21 ♕e4!

Centralisation with a vengeance!

21 ... g6

22 ♘xe6 1-0

On 22...♕xe6 23 ♕xb7+ ♔e8, the reply 24 ♖ge1! wins absolutely everything.

Game 56

Fischer – Gligorić [Yugoslavia]

Havana OL 1966

Ruy Lopez

The Fischer continuation

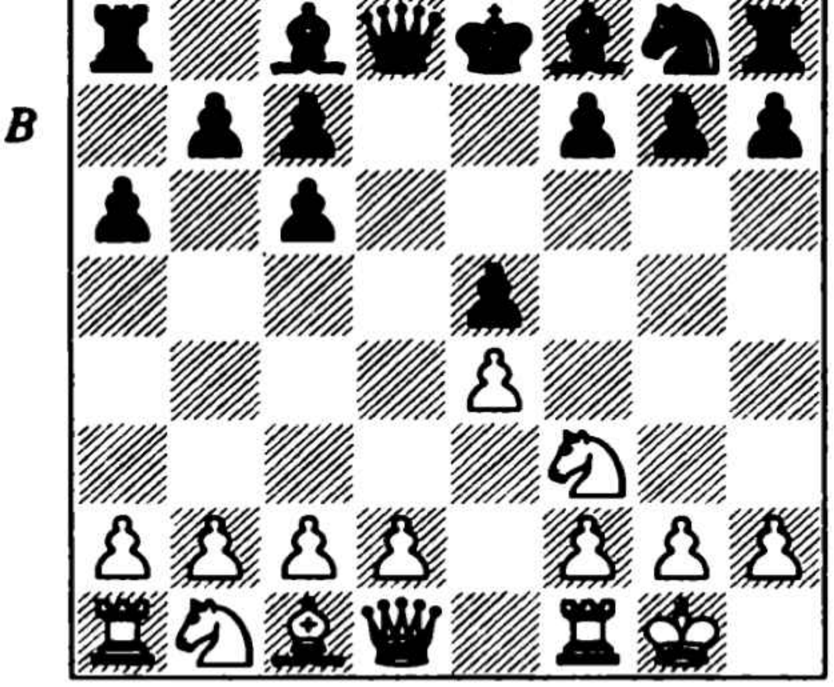
Fischer's surprising 4 ♗xc6, a revival of Emanuel Lasker's Exchange Variation—the one he used at St. Petersburg in 1914 to defeat Alekhine and Capablanca, but which subsequently fell into desuetude because ways to equalise were rapidly discovered—drew from his opponent the obligatory response. However, Fischer's next move, regarded as inferior, and his sixth (the customary follow-up) prepared no one for the gambit which he introduced on move seven. Gligorić reacted with innocent appropriateness until move seventeen, then made a startling blunder that met with speedy retribution. Because, in the course of the tournament, Fischer had played and won two other games with this very same line (demonstrating in each case White's hitherto unsuspected potential) it was promptly dubbed 'The Fischer Variation'. Of course, sticklers will insist that it should be called the Fischer continuation of the Barendregt Variation.

1 e4 e5
2 ♘f3 ♘c6
3 ♗b5 a6
4 ♗xc6!

A surprise! I had introduced this in an earlier game against Portisch (see note to Black's 6th). After sizing up Gligorić over the board, I decided that he was ripe for a repeat perform-

4 ... dxc6

This recapture is so automatic that most annotators fail to comment on it. After 4...bxc6 5 d4 exd4 6 ♕xd4 White maintains an enduring initiative. If 6...♕f6, 7 ♕d3! (but not 7 e5 ♕g6 8 0-0 ♗b7 9 e6? fxe6 10 ♘e5 ♕xg2+! 11 ♔xg2 c5+, an old trap).



"The text poses more problems for Black than does an immediate 5 d4 and Nimzowitsch is once more proved right in his pronouncement that the threat is stronger than its execution. Though White has sold his strong bishop for a knight, a bishop which is usually Black's main strategic problem in many variations of the Lopez, there is no basic flaw in White's tactics. He has gained a tempo for development, somewhat spoiled Black's pawn structure and revived the threat on Black's e-pawn." (Gligorić).

The text was favoured by Emanuel Lasker, Bernstein and also, in recent years, by the Dutch master Barendregt. I had been pondering it for a long time before deciding to include it in my arsenal.

5 ... f6!

"This position has not been seen frequently in the modern grandmaster praxis and, thanks to imaginative Fischer, we have to go back to the 19th century to find the alternatives for Black. It is not clear, however, that Black has any better way of defending the e-pawn." (Gligorić).

Black can defend his e-pawn in numerous ways. Let's look at the lemons first.

a) 5...♗e7? (played by Reshevsky) 6 ♘xe5! ♕d4 7 ♘f3 ♕xe4 8 ♖e1 (instead of 8 d3? as in Malesić-Reshevsky, Maribor 1967) and it's doubtful Black can get out of the opening with equality. One example: 8...♕f5 9 b3! ♘f6 10 ♗a3 (or 10 ♖e5!) 10...♗e6 11 ♘d4, etc.

b) The ballet dancer Harmonist showed good sense by trying 5...♕f6 with the threat of ...♗g4 (against Schallopp in Frankfurt 1887) but after 6 d4 exd4 7 ♗g5! ♕g6 8 ♕xd4 White can get a clear initiative.

c) 5...♗d6? 6 d4 exd4 (not 6...f6? 7 dxe5 fxe5 8 ♘xe5! or 6...♗g4 7 dxe5 ♗xf3 8 ♕xf3 with a comfortable kingside pawn majority, as in Schallopp-Blackburne, Frankfurt 1887) 7 ♕xd4 f6 8 ♘bd2! ♘e7 9 ♘c4, etc.

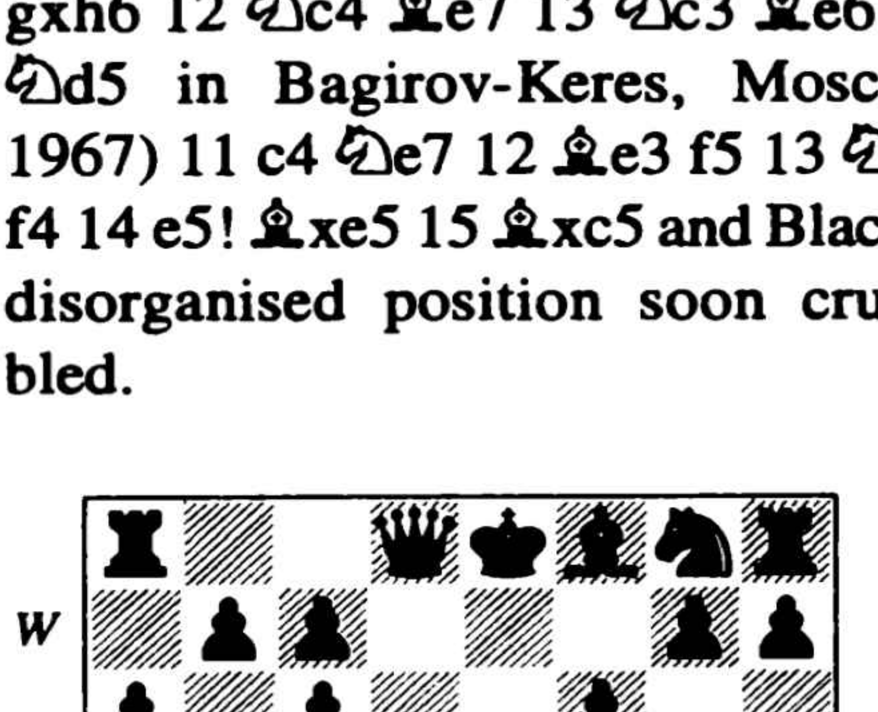
d) A reasonable try is Bronstein's 5...♕d6!? 6 d3 (6 ♘a3? works well against 6...♗e6? 7 ♘g5 but 6...b5! strands the knight) 6...f6 7 ♗e3 c5 8 ♘bd2 ♗e6 9 ♕e2 0-0-0 =. White has possibilities of breaking on the queenside after a3 followed by ♖fb1 and b4 but Black can probably prevent this expansion.

So best is 5...♕d6 6 d4 exd4 7 ♘xd4, etc.

e) The most ambitious continuation is 5...♗g4!? 6 h3 h5!? (Em. Lasker used to win such positions for White after 6...♗xf3 7 ♕xf3. Hort-Kolarov, Poland 1967, continued: 7...♕f6 8 ♕g3 ♗d6 9 d3 ♕g6 10 ♗e3!? ♕xg3 11 fxg3 and White managed to grind out a win in the ensuing endgame) 7 d3! (after 7 c3 ♕d3!, 8 hxg4 hxg4 9 ♘xe5 ♗d6! 10 ♘xd3 ♗h2+ is a draw, whilst a fantasy variation occurs after 8 ♕b3? ♗xf3 9 ♕xb7 ♔d7 10 ♕xa8 ♗xg2! 11 ♔xg2 ♖h6! 12 ♖g1 ♖g6+ 13 ♔h2 ♖xg1 14 ♔xg1 ♗c5 with a winning attack) 7...♕f6 8 ♘bd2! (Keres, in his old book on the open games, wrongly praises this whole line for Black, having considered only 8 hxg4? hxg4 9 ♘g5 ♕h6 10 ♘h3 ♕h4 11 ♔h2 g6 12 ♘c3 gxh3 13 g3 ♕e7 with advantage) 8...♘e7 (now 8...g5 is met by 9 ♘c4! ♗xf3 10 ♕xf3 ♕xf3 11 gxf3 f6 12 h4! gxh4 13 f4 with promising play for the pawn, but not 9 ♖e1? ♗e6 10 d4 g4 11 ♘xe5 gxh3 12 g3 h2+ 13 ♔g2 h4 with initiative) 9 ♖e1! (or 9 ♘c4! ♗xf3 10 ♕xf3 ♕xf3 11 gxf3 ♘g6 12 ♗e3 c5 13 a4! when White stands better and eventually won in Hort-Sliwa, Poland 1967) 9...♘g6 10 d4! ♗d6 11 hxg4 hxg4 12 ♘h2 ♖xh2! 13 ♕xg4! ♖h4 14 ♕f5 and White is slightly better.

6 d4 ♗g4! *(D)*

Best. In our earlier game Portisch had tried 6...exd4 7 ♘xd4! c5 (Portisch played the more sensible 7...♗d6 in a subsequent event but it's still inferior after 8 ♕h5+! g6 9 ♕f3 ♗xh2+? 10 ♔xh2 ♕xd4 11 ♖d1!) 8 ♘b3 ♕xd1 (now 8...♗d6? is met by 9 ♘xc5!) 9 ♖xd1 ♗d6 (the queer-looking 9...b6 as a defensive try scored an unmerited success in a Soviet women's tournament due to White's passive play, but 10 ♗f4 ♖a7! 11 ♘c3 ♘e7 12 a4! followed by a5 is almost decisive; 13...a5? is impossible because of 14 ♘b5!. Polugaevsky's 9...♗d7 offers defensive prospects) 10 ♘a5! b5 (amusing is 10...♗g4? 11 f3 0-0-0?? 12 e5! 1-0 Hort-Zheliandinov, Havana 1967; Keres tried 10...♘h6 but also failed to equalise after 11 ♗xh6 gxh6 12 ♘c4 ♗e7 13 ♘c3 ♗e6 14 ♘d5 in Bagirov-Keres, Moscow 1967) 11 c4 ♘e7 12 ♗e3 f5 13 ♘c3 f4 14 e5! ♗xe5 15 ♗xc5 and Black's disorganised position soon crumbled.



7 c3!

The text involves a gambit.

Curiously, this was Gligorić's own published suggestion when he annotated his game against Lee at Hastings, 1965/6 which had continued: 7 dxe5 ♕xd1 8 ♖xd1 ♗xf3! (Fischer-Smyslov, Monaco 1967 went 8...fxe5? 9 ♖d3! ♗xf3 10 ♖xf3 ♘f6 11 ♘c3 ♗b4 12 ♗g5! ♗xc3 13 bxc3! [was Black playing for the cheap trap 13 ♗xf6? ♗xb2 14 ♗xg7?? ♗xa1 15 ♗xh8 0-0-0!] 13...♖f8 14 ♗xf6 ♖xf6 15 ♖xf6 gxf6 16 ♖d1! and White should have won) 9 gxf3 fxe5 10 f4 ♘f6 and now 11 ♘c3! (instead of 11 fxe5? ♘xe4 12 ♗e3 ♗c5 13 ♘d2 ♘xd2 14 ♗xc5 0-0-0 as in the game) 11...♗d6 12 fxe5 ♗xe5 13 ♘a4! gives White the better of a probable draw.

So best is 7 dxe5! ♕xd1 8 ♖xd1 ♗xf3! 9 gxf3 fxe5 10 ♗e3! followed by ♘d2-c4 with pressure. If 10...♘e7, 11 f4! keeps the initiative.

7 ... exd4

An alternative is 7...♗d6 holding the centre.

8 cxd4 ♕d7

Black dares not accept the pawn: 8...♗xf3 9 ♕xf3 ♕xd4 10 ♖d1 ♕c4 11 ♗f4, etc. However, Gligorić said (in *Chess Review*) that he had completely forgotten his Hastings analysis, which indicated Black's best as 8...c5! 9 d5 ♗d6.

9 h3!

'Putting the question to the bishop.' Nimzowitsch, Steinitz and other theoreticians have pointed out the enormous value of kicking this bishop before the pin becomes really troublesome. Here, White must exercise care since his h-pawn could easily become a potential target.

9 ... ♗e6

This natural retreat, which releases the tension, gives White too free a hand and is the subsequent cause of Gligorić's difficulties. Better is 9...♗h5! as played against me by Jiménez in a later round. After 10 ♘e5! ♗xd1 (bad is 10...♕xh3 11 gxh3 ♗xd1 12 ♖xd1 fxe5 13 dxe5 ♗c5 14 ♔g2 with a dangerous preponderance of centre pawns) 11 ♘xd7 ♔xd7 12 ♖xd1 Black should hold the ending, although he found a way to lose: 12...♖e8 13 f3 (13 ♘c3 is more accurate) 13...♘e7 14 ♘c3 ♔c8 15 ♗e3 f5 16 ♖ac1 fxe4 17 fxe4 g6? (17...♘g6 is correct) 18 ♗f4! ♗g7 19 d5! ♖d8 20 ♘a4! ♖hf8 21 g3 g5? (cracking under the pressure—21...♖f7 is more sensible) 22 ♗xg5 ♖f7 23 ♔g2 cxd5 24 exd5 ♔b8 25 ♖e1 ♗f8 26 ♖f1! ♖g7 27 ♗f6 ♖g8 28 ♖ce1 ♖d7 29 d6! cxd6 30 ♗xe7 ♗xe7 31 ♖f7 1-0 (if 31...♖e8, 32 ♘b6 ♖c7 33 ♘d5).

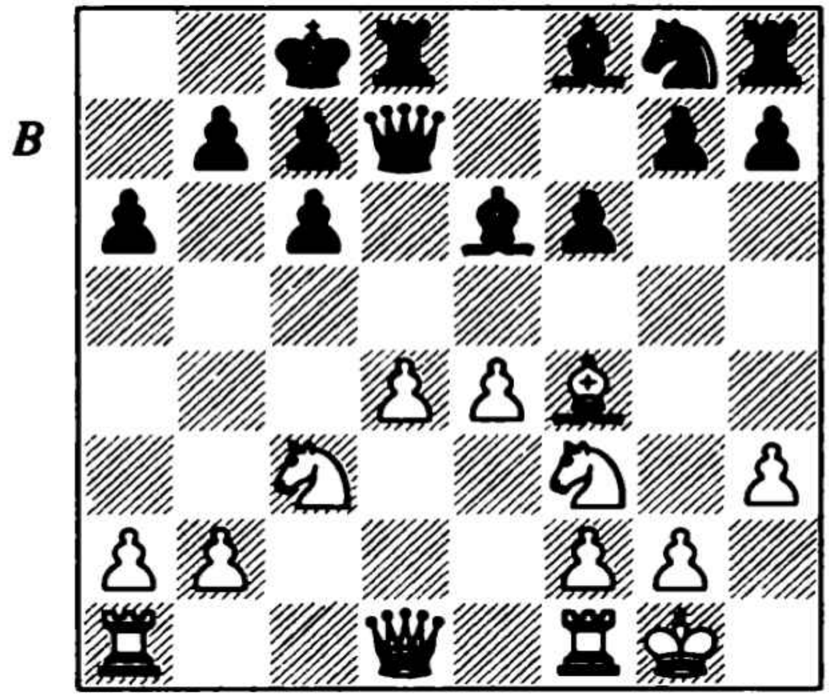
10 ♘c3 0-0-0

11 ♗f4! *(D)*

11 ... ♘e7?

A more solid line is 11...♗d6! 12 ♗xd6 ♕xd6.

Critical is 11...g5!? 12 ♗g3 h5 13 d5! cxd5 14 ♖c1! and now:



a) 14...♗d6 15 ♘a4! ♔b8 16 ♘c5 ♕e7 17 ♘xa6+! bxa6 18 ♘d4 ♗d7 19 ♕b3+ ♔a7 20 ♖xc7+!! ♗xc7 21 ♗xc7 ♗b5 (if 21...♕c5, 22 ♕e3! is the simplest win) 22 ♘c6+! (Palacio) 22...♗xc6 23 ♕b6+ and mate next.

b) The fantastic win is 14...dxe4 15 ♘a4! ♔b8 16 ♖xc7!! ♕xd1 17 ♖c8+!!! ♔a7 (or 17...♔xc8 18 ♘b6 mate) 18 ♗b8+ ♔a8 19 ♘b6 mate.

12 ♖c1 ♘g6

Black has lost time in order to reach this inferior square.

13 ♗g3 ♗d6

14 ♘a4! ♗xg3?

Yielding c5 permanently to the knight.

Correct is 14...♔b8 15 ♘c5 ♕e7.

15 fxg3 ♔b8

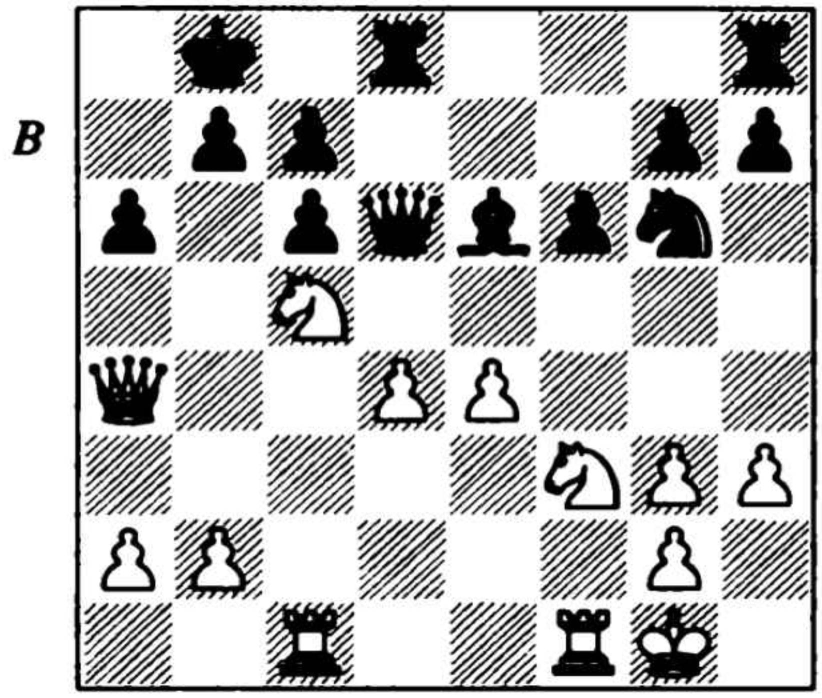
Bad is 15...b6 16 d5! ♗f7 (or 16...cxd5? 17 ♘xb6+) 17 ♕e2!, etc.

16 ♘c5 ♕d6

17 ♕a4! *(D)*

17 ... ♔a7??

Catastrophic. After 17...♗c8 18 ♖c3 (18...♕xg3? 19 ♘e5 ♕h4 20 ♘xc6+) Black might have hung on with 18...♘f8!.



18 ♘xa6! ♗xh3

Desperation! 18...bxa6 19 ♖xc6 costs Black's queen to prevent mate.

19 e5!

The most forceful method.

19 ... ♘xe5

Sheer desperation! After 19...fxe5, 20 ♘c5+ ♔b8 21 ♖c3! followed by ♖a3 is most persuasive.

20 dxe5 fxe5

21 ♘c5+ ♔b8

22 gxh3 e4

Never say die!

23 ♘xe4 ♕e7

24 ♖c3 b5

25 ♕c2 1-0

Time to consolidate. 25 ♕a6 also does the trick. According to a Havana newspaper, some casual spectators who had just wandered in thought White had merely won two pieces for a rook. Nobody could believe that Gligorić was playing on two pieces behind! The rude awakening came when Black resigned.

Larsen [Denmark] – Fischer

Monaco 1967

King's Indian Defence

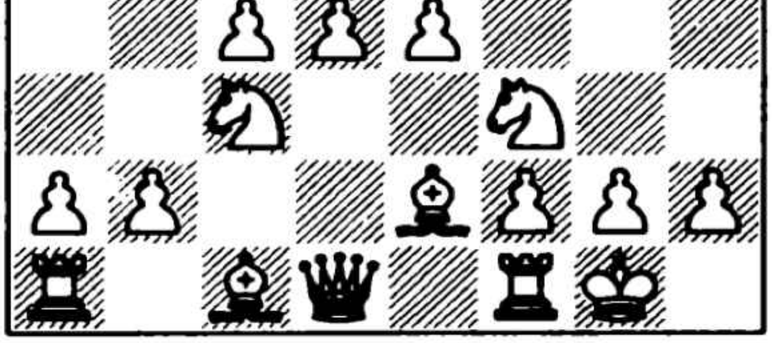
Change of pace

Larsen, uncharacteristically, forces an early exchange of queens so that he can spring a surprise in the resulting endgame. Fischer beats him to it (13...b6) and proceeds to defend with meticulous care. It looks as if a draw must ensue, but Larsen presses. He is rebuffed, and again a draw seems imminent. Larsen senses no danger and, as if by inertia, continues to play for a win. As the game simplifies, the self-inflicted dark-square weaknesses in the Dane's position gradually reveal themselves. By move thirty it becomes Fischer's turn to assume the initiative, and he probes these flaws judiciously. Thrown on the defensive, Larsen makes one or two reckless moves out of which Fischer constructs elegant combinations. Thus, what begins as a barren endgame is transformed into an exhibition of chess sensibility and virtuosity.

1 d4 ♘f6
2 c4 g6
3 ♘c3 ♗g7
4 e4 d6
5 ♗e2

Larsen had won some good games with 5 ♘f3 0-0 6 ♗e3, but after 6...e5! (which no one seems to have played) White gets no advantage. 7 ♗e2 ♘c6 transposes into well-known lines. And 7 d5 ♘g4 8 ♗g5 f6 9 ♗h4 ♕e8 gives Black dynamic play. Now 10 h3 ♘h6 11 g4!? f5 is too risky for White. Finally, 7 dxe5 dxe5 8 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 9 ♘d5(?) ♘a6! gives Black the better ending.

5 ... 0-0
6 ♘f3 e5
7 0-0 ♘c6 *(D)*



8 ♗e3

A bit of a surprise. I had expected 8 d5 ♘e7 9 ♘e1 ♘d7 10 ♘d3 f5 11 ♗d2. Now I had in mind 11...c5! 12 f3 f4! (but not 12...♘f6? 13 g4! f4 14 h4! and Black's kingside counterplay is completely stymied) with active chances for Black. Larsen-Najdorf, Santa Monica 1966 had continued 11...♘f6? 12 f3 f4 13 c5! g5 14 ♖c1 ♘g6 15 cxd6 cxd6 16 ♘b5 ♖f7 17 ♕c2! ♘e8 18 a4 and White came first on the queenside since Black's attack never got off the ground.

8 ... ♖e8!

The cleanest way to equalise. Najdorf found this move after some painful experiences with 8...♘g4 in his match vs. Reshevsky. The main point is that 9 d5 ♘d4! levels.

9 dxe5 dxe5

10 ♕xd8 ♘xd8

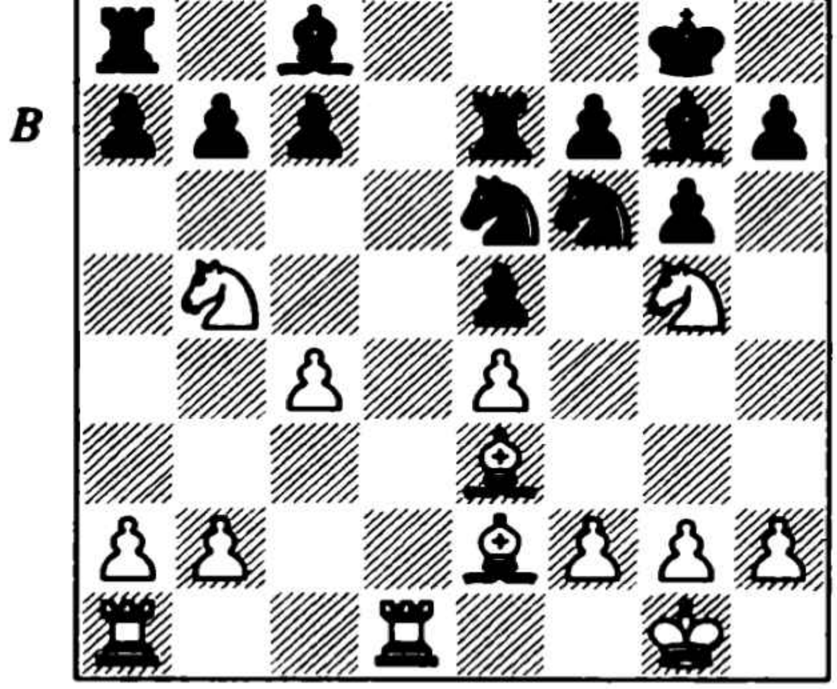
A dubious 'improvement' over 10...♖xd8! as played by Reshevsky in his match with Benko. After 11 ♗g5 Black must not play 11...♖d7? (after which Benko's 12 ♗d1!! followed by ♗a4 was very strong) but 11...♖f8! solves all his problems.

11 ♘b5 ♘e6

12 ♘g5 ♖e7

13 ♖fd1 *(D)*

Larsen is attempting to improve on Reshevsky-Fischer, Santa Monica 1966, which went 13 ♘xe6 ♗xe6 14 f3 c6 15 ♘c3 ♖d7 16 ♖fd1 ♗f8 17 ♔f2 b6 18 b3 ♖b7 19 ♘a4 ♘d7 20 ♘b2 b5 with an eventual draw.



13 ... b6!

In my 9th match game with Reshevsky, 1961, I tried 13...c6!?. Larsen told me he had intended 14 ♘xa7!? (instead of 14 ♘xe6 ♗xe6 15 ♘c3 ♖d7 =) 14...♗d7 15 ♘xe6 ♗xe6 16 f3. But after 16...♖d7! (threatening ...♖d4) Black has fair play for the pawn, considering that the knight is stranded on a7.

The text was an improvement that I had hatched some time ago.

14 c5!?

Typically, Larsen adopts an enterprising continuation. He should settle for 14 ♘xe6 ♗xe6 15 f3 with a draw in view. By overestimating his chances, he gradually drifts into a losing position.

14 ... ♘xc5

Naturally not 14...bxc5?, when 15 ♘xe6 ♗xe6 16 ♗xc5 ♖d7 17 f3 wins.

15 ♖d8+ ♗f8

Not better is 15...♖e8 16 ♖xe8+ ♘xe8 17 ♗xc5 bxc5 18 ♗c4!. Or 15...♘e8? 16 ♗xc5 bxc5 17 ♘xc7

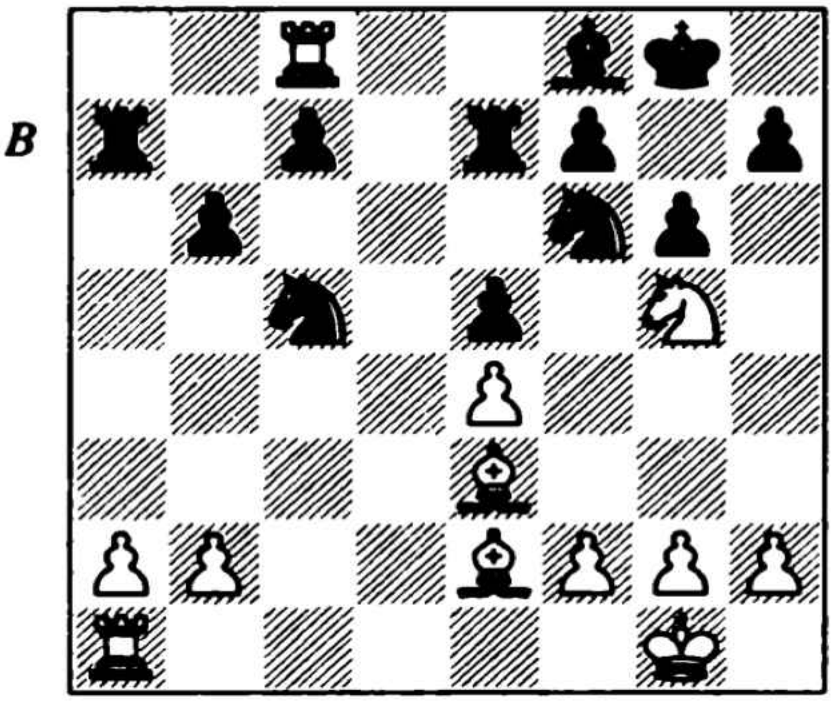
♖xc7 18 ♖xe8+ ♗f8 19 ♘xh7! winning material.

16 ♘xa7 ♖xa7

Instead 16...♗b7 17 ♖xa8 ♗xa8 18 f3 leaves White with a slight pull despite his misplaced knight. After 18...c6, 19 ♘c8 ♖b7 20 ♖d1 maintains some pressure.

17 ♖xc8 *(D)*

White recovers his pawn with even chances.



17 ... ♔g7

Black wisely resists the temptation of 17...♘cxe4?? 18 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 19 ♗h6. But 17...h6! is even more accurate than the text, e.g. 18 ♘f3 ♔g7 19 ♗xc5 bxc5 20 ♗d3 completely neutralising any initiative for either side.

18 f3 ♘e8

19 a3(?)

Larsen's reluctance to simplify will soon backfire on him. 19 ♗xc5! bxc5 20 ♖b8 is correct, with theoretical winning chances because of the passed a-pawn, but it would be difficult to make headway because of the opposite-coloured bishops.

19 ... ♘d6

20 ♖d8

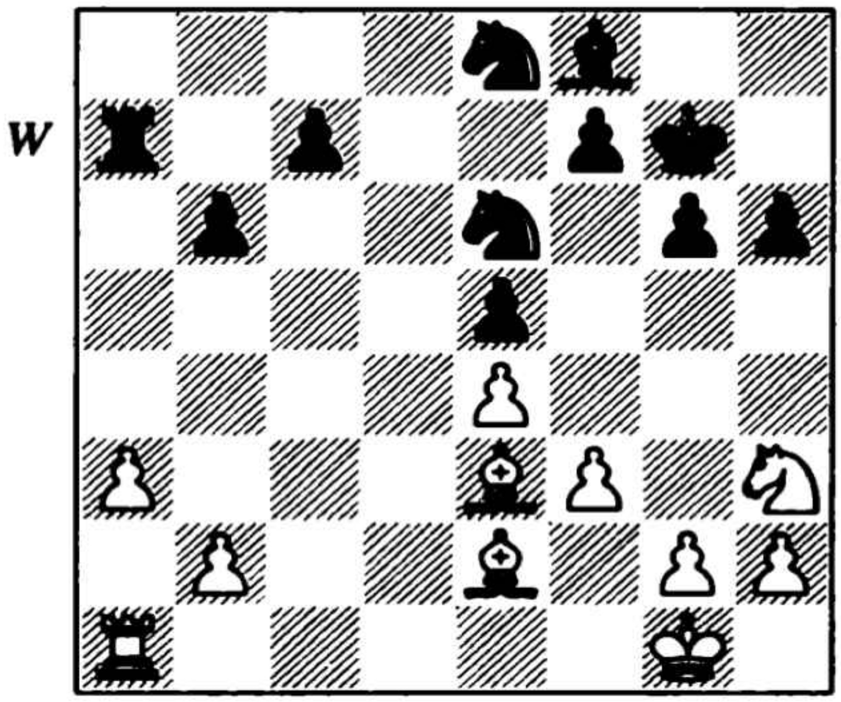
Optimistic as ever! 20 ♖b8 ♘d7 21 ♖d8 ♘b7 22 ♖c8 ♘d6 would lead to a draw by repetition.

20 ... h6

21 ♘h3 ♘e6

22 ♖b8 ♖e8

23 ♖xe8 ♘xe8 *(D)*



"Now White's initiative is over and the position is even but by no means drawish. There is a lot of play." (Kmoch).

White's dark squares, notably d4, are weak. But it's still not too serious.

24 ♗b5

Pointless. White should start bringing his knight into the game via f2. He can't prevent ...♗c5, gaining control of the dark squares. Of course not 24 b4? ♗xb4.

24 ... ♘d6

25 ♗f1 ♘b7!

26 ♘f2 ♗c5!

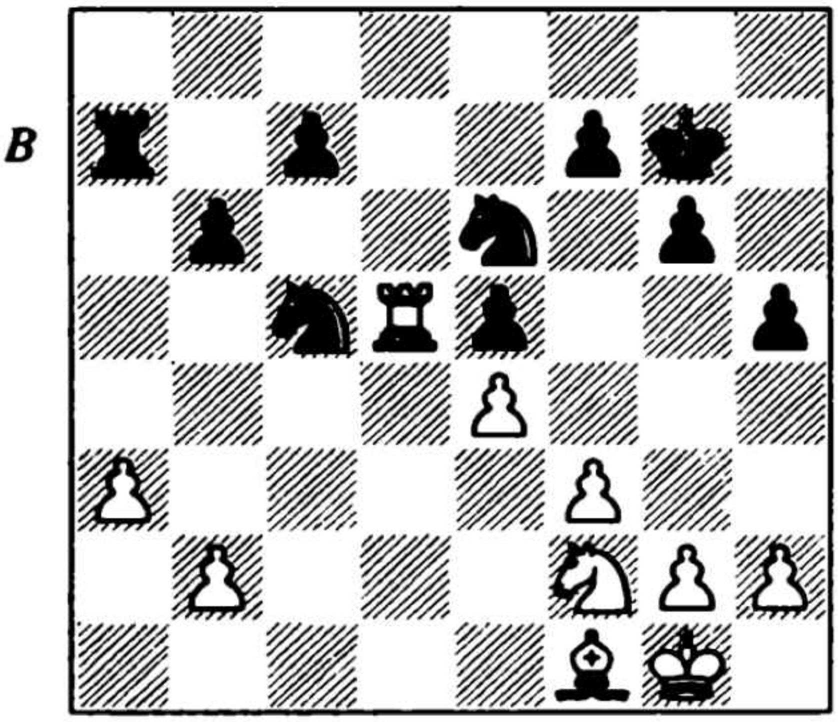
27 ♗xc5 ♘bxc5

28 ♖d1 h5!

To keep the knight out of g4. This 'prophylactic' thrust would have gladdened Nimzowitsch's heart. Not 28...♘d4? 29 ♘g4 f6 30 f4!.

29 ♖d5 *(D)*

Larsen still has illusions, but his game is fast deteriorating. More prudent is 33 ♘d3 ♘xd3 34 ♗xd3 ♘d4 35 ♔f2. White probably should hold the ending despite Black's creeping pressure.



29 ... ♔f6

30 h4 ♔e7!

31 ♗c4

The pawn is poisoned: 31 ♖xe5? c6 followed by ...♘d7 (or ...f6). The mission of the rook has failed, but no serious harm has been done.

31 ... c6

32 ♖d2 ♘d4!

Finally the knight has gained this dominant outpost.

The more active 33 ♘d3 is preferable. Now Black's tactical threats begin to proliferate.

33 ... f5!

34 b4

Meets with a still sharper counterthrust. 34 ♘d3 offered White a better chance for survival. After the text White's a-pawn is weakened.

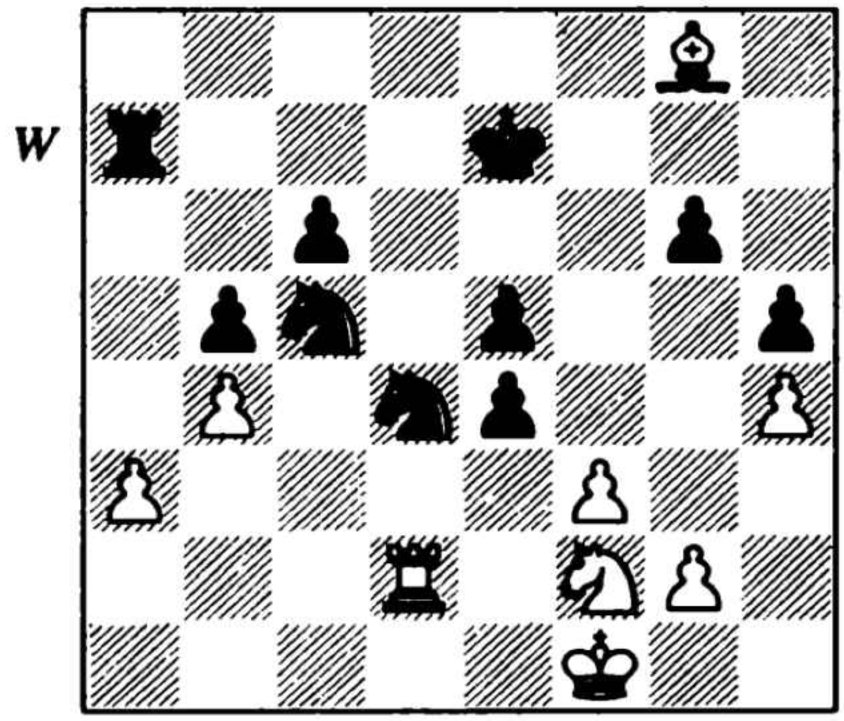
Not 34 exf5 ♘xf5 with the double threat of ...♘e3+ or ...♘xh4 (and if 35 ♖e2? ♘g3+).

34 ... b5!

35 ♗g8

35 bxc5 bxc4 clearly wins for Black, and 35 ♗xb5? is refuted by 35...♘cb3.

35 ... fxe4 *(D)*



Fixing White with another weakness.

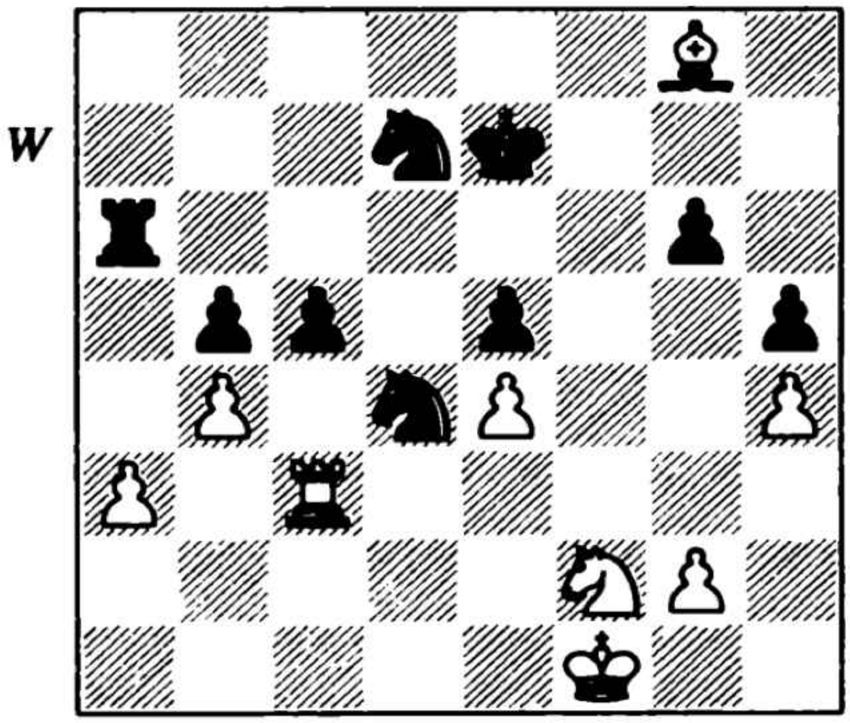
36 fxe4

Not 36 bxc5 e3 37 ♖xd4 (37 ♖d3 exf2 38 ♔xf2 ♖a8 39 ♗a2 b4 or 37 ♖a2? exf2 38 ♔xf2 ♔f8!) 37...exd4 38 ♘d3 ♖xa3 39 ♔e2 ♖c3, etc.

Threatening ...♘c2 which, if it had been played immediately, could have been met by ♖c3.

38 ♖c3 c5! *(D)*

This surprising combination apparently confused Larsen, who was in time-pressure.



39 g4?

The last blunder. After 39 bxc5 b4! 40 ♖c1! (not 40 axb4 ♖a1+) there's still a lot of fight. If 40...♖xa3 (or 40...bxa3 41 ♗a2), then 41 c6 ♘b6.

39 ... c4

This protected passed pawn is just too strong. Not 39...♘f6 40 ♖xc5!.

40 gxh5 gxh5
41 ♗d5 ♘f6
42 ♖g3 ♘xd5
43 exd5 ♖f6
44 ♔g2

The sealed move. White is completely tied up. On 44 ♔g1? ♘e2+ wins. Or if 44 ♔e1 ♖f4 mops up.

44 ... ♘f5

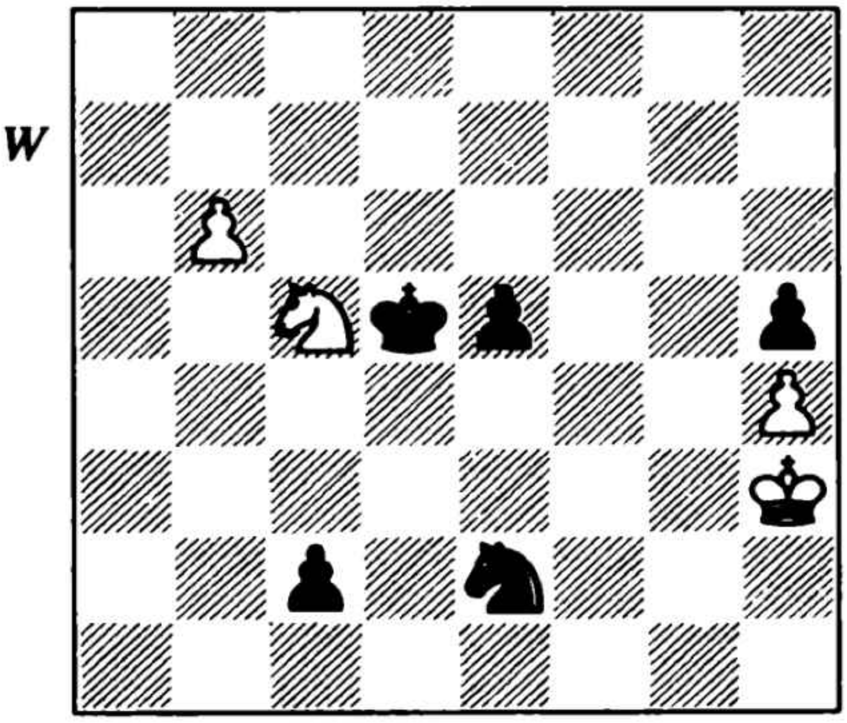
46 ♔f3 ♘d4+
47 ♔e3

47 ♔e4 ♔d6 puts White in zugzwang. If 48 ♖h2 (to prevent ...♖g2) then 48...♖g3.

47 ... ♖g2
48 ♖h1 ♔d6
49 ♘e4+ ♔xd5
50 ♘c3+ ♔e6
51 ♖c1

White has to prevent ...♖c2 a then the knight cannot move becaus of ...♖e2 mate.

51 ... ♖h2
52 a4 ♖h3+
53 ♔f2 ♘b3
54 ♔g2 ♘xc1
55 ♔xh3 bxa4
56 ♘xa4 ♘e2
57 b5 c3
58 b6 c2
59 ♘c5+ ♔d5 *(D)*



60 ♘b3

White can choose his own en e.g. 60 ♘d3 (alternatively, 60 b c1♕ 61 b8♕ ♕h1 mate) 60...♘f4+ 61 ♘xf4+ exf4 62 b7 c1♕ 63 b8♕ ♕h1 mate.

60 ... ♔c6
61 ♔g2 ♔xb6
0-1

Game 58
Fischer – Geller [USSR]
Skopje 1967
Sicilian Defence

Flawed masterpiece

After Fischer dropped this miniature (his third loss in a row to Geller) Kurajica concluded: "He just cannot play against Geller." Another Yugoslav, Trifunović, opined at greater length:

"Geller is one of the best-prepared players in the world as to opening theory, and Fischer cannot be superior in that respect ... Fischer (as White) chose a very sharp and modern variation ... playing to win in the early stage of the game, as he usually does, and successfully, against weaker opponents. Fischer played better and attained a superior position, but it was very difficult to find the right solution over-the-board. There was his mistake ... He has to impose a hard positional game, playing without pretensions for a win in the very opening."

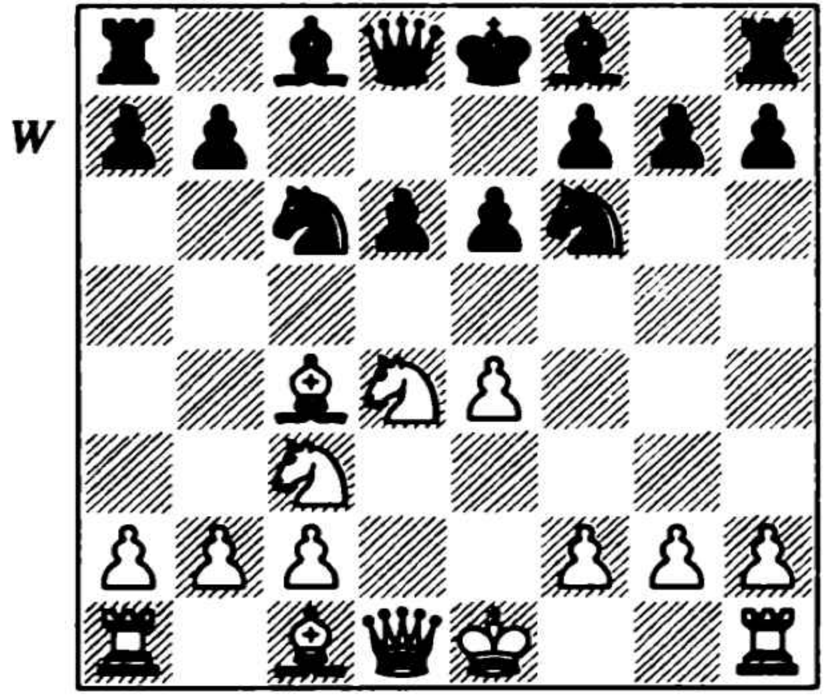
Nowhere but in the notes that follow have the above errors been answered. Were it not for a momentary lapse (20 a3?) Fischer would have won this little gem on move twenty—despite his critics.

1 e4 c5
2 ♘f3 d6
3 d4 cxd4
4 ♘xd4 ♘f6
5 ♘c3 ♘c6
6 ♗c4 e6 *(D)*

There is no apparent refutation to Benko's roguish 6...♕b6!?. Saidy ventured it against me in the 1967 US Ch. After 7 ♘b3 e6 8 0-0 ♗e7 9 ♗e3 ♕c7 10 f4 0-0 11 ♗d3 it's a mutually hard game. Also see Game 11.

7 ♗e3

7 ♗b3 cuts down Black's options. Some examples: 7...a6 8 f4! ♕a5 (8...♘a5 9 f5! ♘xb3 10 axb3 ♗e7 11 ♕f3 0-0 12 ♗e3 ♗d7 13 g4 e5 14 ♘de2 with a quick crush in sight: Fischer-Bielicki, Mar del Plata



1960; 8...♕c7 9 f5! ♘xd4 10 ♕xd4 exf5 11 exf5 ♗xf5 12 0-0 yields White a strong attack) 9 0-0! and Black can try:

a) 9...♘xd4? 10 ♕xd4 d5 (after 10...♕c5 11 ♕xc5 dxc5, 12 a4! puts Black in an excruciating bind) 11 ♗e3! and now:

a1) 11...♘g4 12 ♔h1! ♘xe3 13 ♕xe3 dxe4 14 ♕xe4! ♗e7 15 ♖ae1 and mate is lurking in the wings, e.g. 15...g6 16 ♘d5! ♗d8 17 ♕e5 0-0 18 ♘e7+! wins.

a2) Slightly more accurate, but still bad, is 11...dxe4 12 ♘xe4 ♗e7 13 ♘d6+, etc.

a3) 11...♘xe4 12 ♘xe4 dxe4 13 f5! ♕b4 (if 13...exf5, then 14 g4!, e.g. 14...♕b4 15 ♗a4+! b5 16 ♕d5! winning, or 14...♗e6 15 gxf5 ♗xb3 16 axb3 ♕b4 17 ♖a4! ♕xd4 18 ♖xd4 and Black is in a curiously hopeless predicament: 18...♗e7 19 ♖xe4 ♔f8 20 f6!! ♗xf6 21 ♖xf6! gxf6 22 ♗h6+ and mates) 14 fxe6 ♗xe6 15 ♗xe6! fxe6 16 ♖xf8+! ♕xf8 17 ♕a4+! 1-0 Fischer-Dely, Skopje 1967. After 17...b5 18 ♕xe4 ♖d8 19 ♕c6+! ♖d7 20 ♖d1 ♕e7, now 21 ♗b6! (Dely); about the only move that doesn't win is 21 ♗g5? 0-0!.

b) 9...d5 is a better try, but after 10 ♘xc6! bxc6 11 f5! White's on top. After 11...d4? 12 ♘e2 e5, either 13 ♘g3 or 13 ♕d3 retains the advantage, whilst 11...♗e7 is met by 12 e5 ♘d7 13 fxe6 fxe6 (or 13...♘xe5 14 ♗f4!) 14 ♕g4. Finally, 11...♗c5+ 12 ♔h1 0-0 may be tenable.

7 ... ♗e7

Too routine. Black should start quicker action on the queenside. More reasonable is 7...a6 8 ♗b3 ♕c7 9 ♕e2 (or 9 f4) 9...b5 10 0-0-0 ♘a5 (10...♗b7 is also possible, when White might reply 11 f3).

8 ♗b3

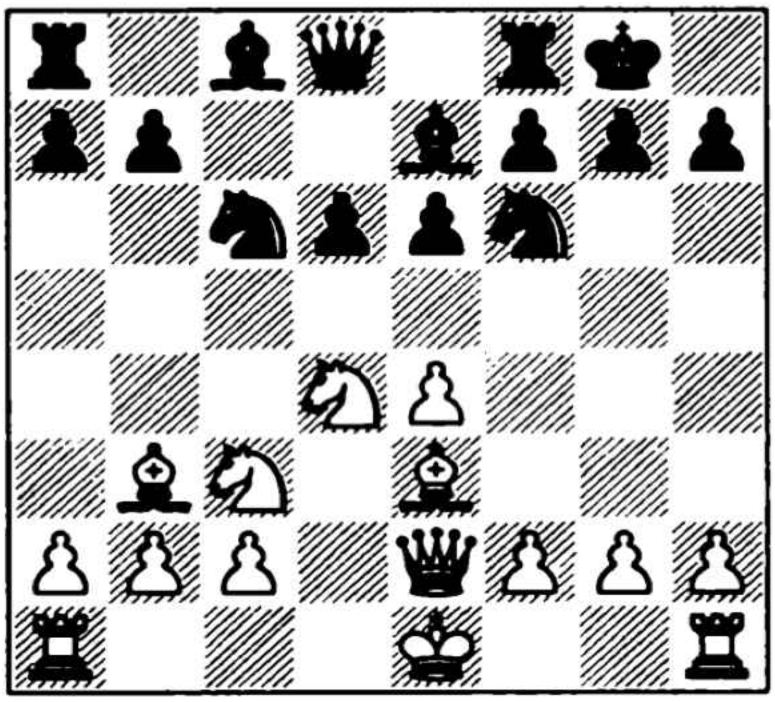
Against Pascual, in a clock exhibition game at Davoa (Philippines) 1967, I essayed 8 ♕e2 a6 9 0-0-0 ♕c7 10 ♗b3 ♗d7 11 g4 ♘xd4 12 ♗xd4 (fishy; 12 ♖xd4 is better) 12...e5 13 g5 exd4 14 gxf6 dxc3 15 fxe7 cxb2+ 16 ♔b1 ♔xe7? (after 16...♗e6, Black equalises) 17 ♕h5! g6 18 ♕h4+ f6 19 e5! dxe5 20 f4 e4 21 ♕h6 ♖ae8 22 ♖d4 ♔d8 23 ♖hd1 ♔c8 (23...♖e7 allows the beautiful 24 ♗e6!! ♖xe6 25 ♕g7, mopping up) 24 ♖xd7 ♕xd7 25 ♖xd7 ♔xd7 26 ♕g7+ ♔d6 27 ♕xb7 e3 28 ♕b6+ 1-0.

8 ... 0-0

9 ♕e2 *(D)*

Preparing queenside castling and disallowing the reply ...♘g4, which would be the case after 9 ♕d2.

B



9 ... ♕a5

Geller's attempt to improve on the customary 9...a6 10 0-0-0 ♕c7 11 g4 ♘xd4 12 ♖xd4! b5 (Tal gives 12...e5 13 ♖c4! ♕d8 14 g5 ♘e8 15 ♖xc8! ♖xc8 16 h4 ♘c7 17 ♕g4 followed by h5 with a terrific attack) 13 g5 ♘d7 14 ♕h5 ♘e5 15 f4 ♘c6 16 ♖d3 ♘b4 17 ♖d2 ♖d8 18 f5 g6 19 fxg6 hxg6 20 ♕h4 ♘c6 21 ♕g3 ♘e5 22 h4 ♗b7 23 h5 b4 24 hxg6 ♘xg6 25 ♖dh2 bxc3 26 ♗d4 e5 27 ♖h8+!! ♘xh8 28 g6! ♗f6 29 gxf7++ ♔f8 30 ♖h7! and White wins; Velimirović-Nikolić, Belgrade 1964.

10 0-0-0

10 0-0 also comes into consideration.

10 ... ♘xd4

Apparently Geller rejected the move 10...♗d7 due to 11 ♘db5! ♘e8 12 ♗f4 a6 13 ♘xd6 ♘xd6 14 ♗xd6 ♗xd6 15 ♖xd6 ♕g5+ 16 ♕d2 ♕xg2 17 ♖d1 ♗e8 18 ♕f4 with good pressure.

11 ♗xd4 ♗d7

Black cannot afford to go pawn-snatching with 11...♕g5+? 12 ♔b1:

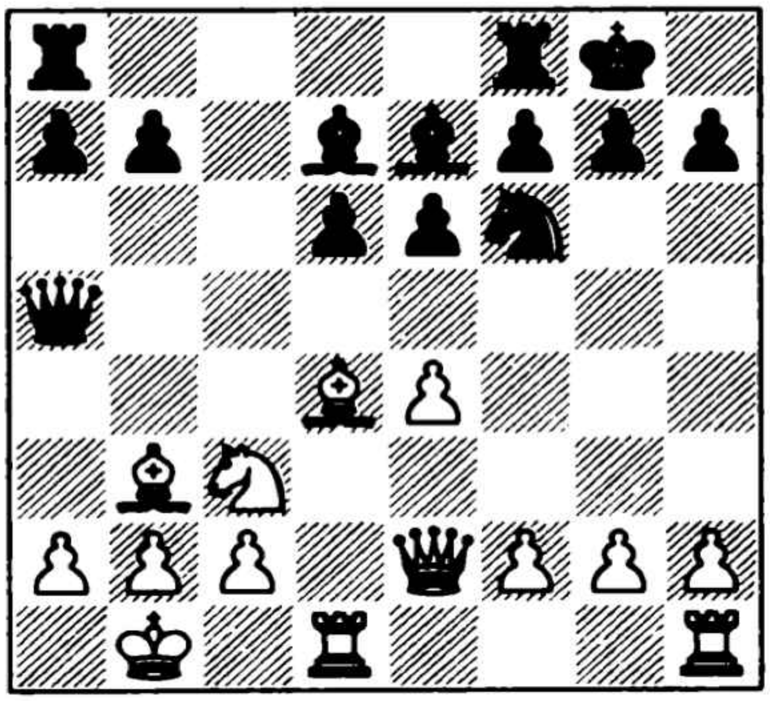
a) 12...♕xg2? 13 ♖hg1! ♕h3 (if 13...♕xh2 14 ♖h1 ♕f4, then 15 ♖dg1! e5 [or 15...g6 16 ♗e3 ♕e5 17 ♖g5] 16 ♗e3 ♗g4 17 ♕e1 ♕f3 18 ♖g3 winning the queen) 14 e5 ♘e8 (on 14...dxe5, 15 ♕xe5 carries too many threats) 15 exd6 ♗xd6 16 ♗xg7! ♘xg7 17 ♖xd6 and it's not a game any more.

b) Instead 12...e5 is interesting, but White has 13 h4 ♕xg2 14 ♖dg1 ♗g4 15 ♖xg2! ♗xe2 16 ♘xe2 exd4 17 ♘xd4 with advantage, e.g. 17...♘xe4 18 f3! followed by ♘f5.

12 ♔b1 *(D)*

A critical position. White's immediate threat is 13 ♗xf6.

B



12 ... ♗c6

In a later round Sofrevski tried to improve against me with 12...♖ad8 but got into trouble after 13 ♕e3!.

Black now rejected a dangerous pawn sac which must be examined very carefully: 13...b5!?. After 14 a3! (but not 14 ♗xa7 ♜a8 with active play) 14...b4 15 axb4 ♛xb4 16 ♗xa7 ♛b7 17 ♛b6! ♛a8 18 f3 and Black has no good way to prosecute his attack. Consequently, Sofrevski continued 13...b6 14 ♗xf6! gxf6? (Black should reconcile himself to the loss of a pawn after 14...♗xf6 15 ♜xd6 ♗c8) 15 ♘d5!! ♜fe8 (if 15...exd5 16 ♜xd5 ♛a6, then 17 ♜h5! wins, e.g. 17...♗g4 18 ♛g3, etc.) 16 ♘xe7+ (16 ♛h6! is a quicker kill) 16...♜xe7 17 ♜xd6 ♜c8 18 ♛d4 ♗e8? 19 ♛xf6 1-0.

13 f4 ♜ad8

If 13...e5, then 14 ♗e3! ♗xe4 (not 14...♘xe4? 15 ♘xe4 ♗xe4 16 ♗d2 winning) 15 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 16 ♛f3 with advantage.

14 ♜hf1

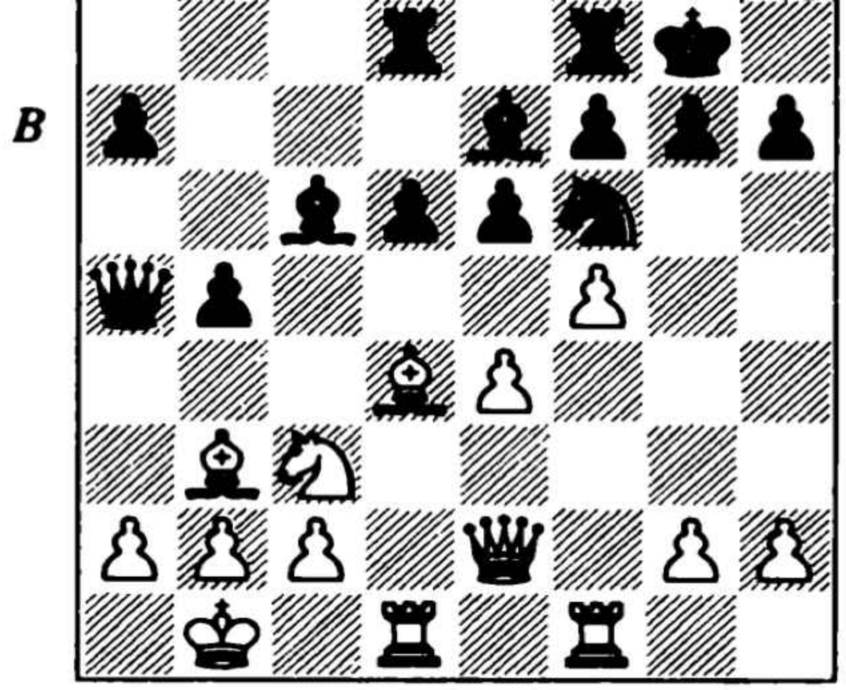
I already had in mind the ensuing sacrifice. Also strong is 14 g4, not to mention Trifunović's *post-mortem* suggestion 14 f5! exf5 (not 14...e5 15 ♗f2 d5? 16 exd5 ♘xd5 17 ♘xd5 ♗xd5 18 ♛xe5 winning a piece) 15 exf5 ♜fe8 16 ♛f2 with positional pressure.

14 ... b5

After 14...d5 15 e5 ♘e4, 16 f5! maintains the initiative.

15 f5!! ***(D)***

The die is cast. I didn't want to lose a tempo playing it safe with 15 a3.



15 ... b4

16 fxe6! bxc3

17 exf7+ ♚h8

Not 17...♜xf7 18 ♗xf7+ ♚xf7 19 ♛c4+ d5 20 ♛xc6, etc.

18 ♜f5! ♛b4

On 18...♛c7 I had intended 19 ♜df1 (threatening ♜xf6), when 19...♘d7 (19...♘xe4 20 ♛g4 is bitter) is met by the decisive 20 ♜h5!, threatening ♜xh7+.

19 ♛f1!

A hard move to find—it took around 45 minutes. The threat of ♜xf6 must be attended to.

19 ... ♘xe4 ***(D)***

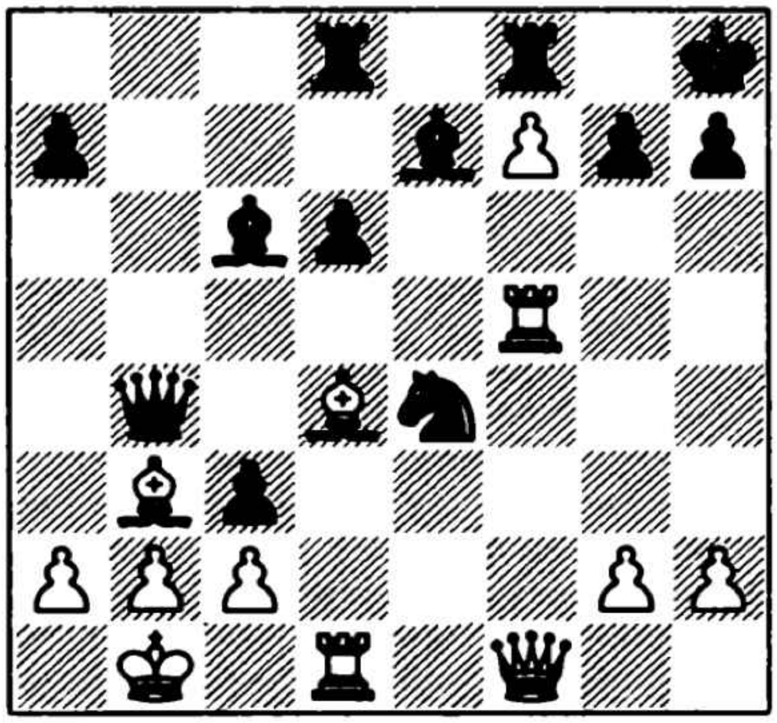
A fighting defence. 19...♘d7 loses immediately to 20 ♜h5 ♘e5 21 ♛f5 h6 22 ♛g6!! ♜xf7 (22...♘xg6 allows 23 ♜xh6 mate) 23 ♗xe5, and so on.

On 19...♜xf7, 20 ♗xc3 wins.

19...♗xe4 gives White the pleasant choice of 20 ♜xf6 or 20 ♜b5.

19...♘g4 is objectively best, but after 20 ♗xc3 (20 ♜h5 ♗d7! holds) 20...♛b7 (20...♛xe4 21 ♜d4!) 21

♕f4 White has three pawns for the piece and a winning attack in the offing.



20 a3?

Losing! A couple of hours after the game it occurred to me that White has a problem-like win after 20 ♕f4!! (with the threat of ♖h5). whereupon Black has no adequate defence:

a) 20...d5 21 ♕e5 ♘f6 22 ♖xf6 ♗xf6 23 ♕xf6!.

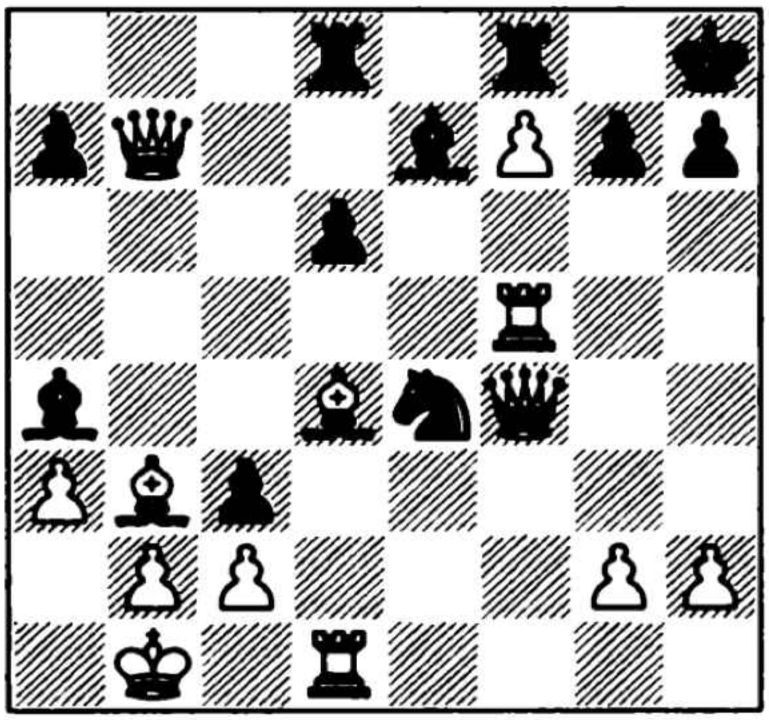
b) 20...♘d2+ 21 ♖xd2 cxd2 22 c3! ♕xb3 23 ♗xg7+! ♔xg7 24 ♕g4+ ♔h8 25 ♕d4+ and White delivers mate.

c) 20...cxb2 21 ♖h5! (threatening 22 ♗xg7+ followed by 23 ♕h6+) 21...♘c3+ (if 21...♗f6, 22 ♕f5 h6 23 ♖xh6+! gxh6 24 ♕g6!! forces mate) 22 ♔xb2 ♘xd1+ (or 22...♖xf7 23 ♕xf7 ♘xd1+ 24 ♔b1!! ♕xd4 25 ♖xh7+!! ♔xh7 26 ♕h5 mate) 23 ♔c1 ♖xf7 (forced) 24 ♗xf7! (24 ♕xf7?? ♗g5+) and Black has no satisfactory answer to the threat of 25 ♖xh7+ ♔xh7 26 ♕f5+ and mates. If 24...♗d7, 25 ♗xg7+ wins Black's queen.

20 ... ♕b7

21 ♕f4 ♗a4!! *(D)*

I didn't see it! Moreover, the strength of this resource didn't become fully apparent to me for another two moves.



22 ♕g4

Also futile is 22 ♕h6 ♗f6 23 ♖xf6 ♗xb3.

22 ... ♗f6!

23 ♖xf6 ♗xb3!

At long last I saw the point of Geller's defence. As I was studying 24 ♖f4, it suddenly dawned on me that 24...♗a2+ would be curtains.

So—

0-1

After 24 cxb3, 24...♘xf6! is the quietus. It is not enough to be a good player, observed Dr. Tarrasch; you must also play well.

Skopje 1967

King's Indian Defence

The erring bishop

In order to restrain Black from creating complications, Kholmov employs an unpretentious system. But he posts his bishop prematurely on a3, then penetrates ambitiously with 11 ♗d6. Fischer, with the routine 11...♕a5, promptly refutes. It is instructive to observe how, from now on, he creates an unhealthy climate wherever the bishop seeks lodging. His queen returns to a3 on no less than three separate occasions, prompting one annotator to inquire, dryly, whether he was perhaps inventing perpetual motion. As early as move twelve it became apparent to both players that White was lost. However, Kholmov did his best to avert the inevitable for another twenty moves.

Fischer (with White) had lost to Kholmov in their only previous encounter, played via telephone to Havana in 1965. Here, Fischer's victory brought him first place, a half point ahead of Geller.

1 d4 ♘f6
2 ♘f3 g6
3 g3 ♗g7
4 ♗g2 0-0
5 0-0 d6
6 ♘c3

A straightforward but essentially passive development. The idea is to avoid creating a weakness with c4; however, a drawback is White can no longer dominate the centre with a pawn-wedge.

6 ... ♘bd7

More flexible than 6...d5 which I adopted against Ivkov at the 1966 Piatagorsky Cup. That game continued 7 ♘e5 c6 8 e4 and now Black could have equalised easily with 8...dxe4 (instead of 8...♗e6?) 9 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 10 ♗xe4 ♗h3 (not 10...c5? 11 ♕f3!) 11 ♖e1 ♘d7, etc.

7 b3

A normal continuation, although it is dubious that White's bishop is effective once posted on b2 or a3. This system is characterised by pawn symmetry and quiet play with drawing tendencies. But a draw is precisely what I could not afford in this crucial encounter.

8 e4 e5 also presents Black with no opening problems.

7 ... e5

8 dxe5

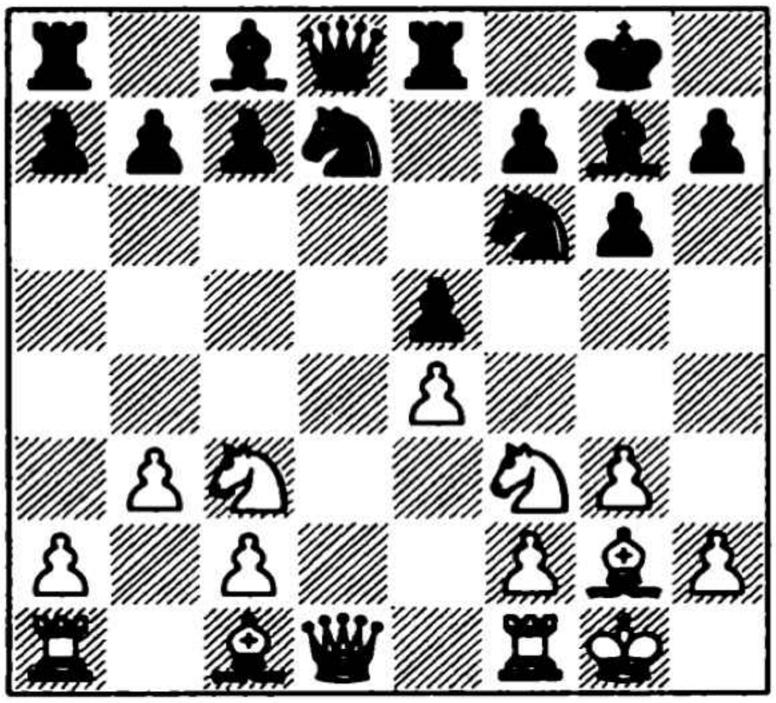
Dissipating the central tension. Black has no trouble getting play after 8 e4 exd4 9 ♘xd4 ♖e8.

8 ... dxe5

9 e4

"The turbulent complications of the normal King's Indian can hardly arise, and the position can already be evaluated as even." (Trifunović).

9 ... ♖e8 *(D)*



10 ♗a3

Better is 10 a4 a5 11 ♗a3 whereupon the bishop will be immune from eventual attack after ...♕a5.

"Even so early, White is on the wrong track. The bishop has nothing to seek on the a3-f8 diagonal. Yet, while it is easy now to condemn this move, till now it has often been adopted by White with never a harsh word. The punishment which ensues, however ... is more severe than any this commentator has observed hitherto. 10 ♗b2 is correct." (Trifunović).

10 ... c6

"Black invites the bishop to seize a strong position." (Trifunović).

11 ♗d6?

Kholmov consumed over half an hour on this mistake. The idea is to keep Black bottled up while exerting pressure on the e-pawn. The only trouble with the move, however, is that it loses. As Tarrasch wrote: "When you don't know what to do, wait for your opponent to get an idea—it's sure to be wrong!" 11 ♕e2 was indicated.

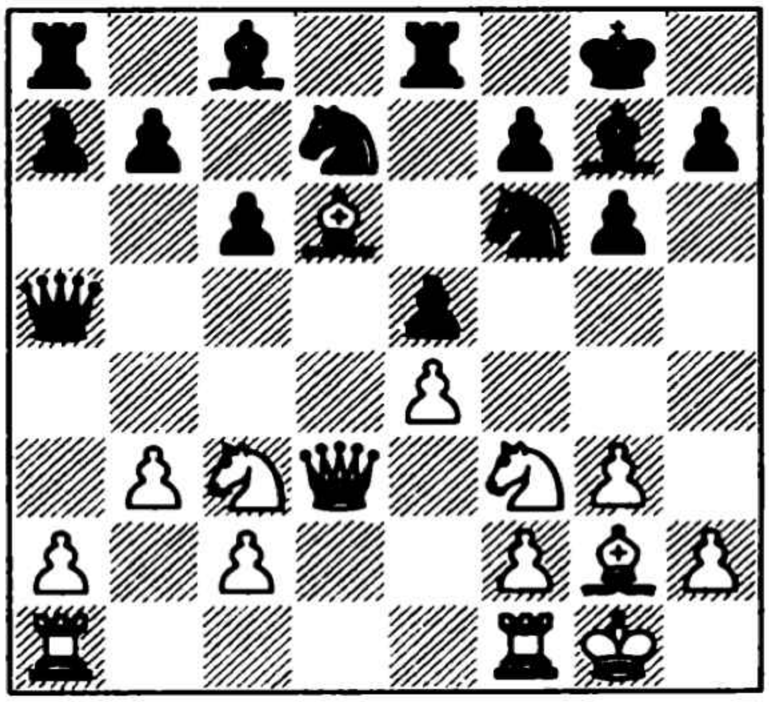
11 ... ♕a5!

This normal freeing manoeuvre is now devastating.

12 ♕d3 *(D)*

What else? 12 b4 ♕a3 leaves White in the same predicament.

Black now has a shot which wins two pieces for a rook; or, as it turns out, a lowly pawn (which proves fatal).



12 ... ♖e6!

Springing the trap! White cannot avoid material loss. Geller, who was tied with me for the lead, had displayed great interest in my game—up to now. When he saw this position, he smiled wryly. I never noticed him looking at the game again.

13 b4

No matter how White wriggles and squirms, he cannot escape the fate in store for him. After 13 ♘e2 Black has the pleasant choice of either 13...♘xe4 or 13...♘e8—both of which win a pawn.

After the game Kholmov told me he had originally intended 13 ♘g5 ♖xd6 14 ♕xd6 ♕xc3 15 ♕e7 with active play. However, he saw (too late) that simply 14...h6! squelches all such illusions.

13 ... ♕a3!

Renewing the ancient threat of ...♖xd6.

14 ♗c7

The wandering bishop hopes to receive succour. But, in so doing, it must abandon protection of the b-pawn.

14 ... ♕xb4

Perhaps White was hoping for 14...♘e8 15 ♗a5 b6 16 ♖ab1! bxa5 17 ♖b3 ♘c5! 18 bxc5 ♕xc5 19 ♖fb1 where Black's technical difficulties are great.

15 ♖ab1 ♕e7!

A cute tactical point. 15...♕f8? loses the exchange after 16 ♘g5 (if the rook retreats, then White's bishop returns to d6). Now 16 ♘g5 is refuted by 16...♘c5. For all practical purposes the game is over.

16 ♖fd1 ♘e8

17 ♗a5

No rest for the weary.

17 ... ♖d6

18 ♕e2 ♖xd1+

19 ♕xd1 ♗f8

20 ♘d2

Bad—as is everything else. 20 ♗b4 ♕f6 21 ♗xf8 ♘xf8 leaves White a pawn behind with his weak squares still showing.

20 ... ♕a3!

Winning even more material.

21 ♘c4 ♕c5

22 ♗f1 b5

23 ♘d2

23 ♗b4 drops a piece to 23...♕d4.

23 ... ♕a3!

This curious shuttle has proved White's undoing.

24 ♘b3 ♘c5

25 ♗xb5

Desperation. After 25 ♗d8 ♘e6! 26 ♗a5 ♘d6 Black wins as he pleases.

25 ... cxb5

26 ♘xb5 ♕a4

27 ♘xc5

Perhaps White had intended 27 ♕d5, but 27...♕xe4! spells *finis*.

27 ... ♕xa5

28 ♕d5 ♖b8

29 a4 ♗h3!

Quickest.

30 ♕xe5 ♖c8
31 ♘d3 ♕xa4
32 ♘e1 a6
0-1

The knight has no good square. If 33 ♘d4 ♗g7. Or 33 ♘c3 ♕c4. Finally, 33 ♘a7 ♖c7 34 ♖a1 ♕d7 35 ♖xa6 ♖xa7 36 ♖xa7 ♕xa7 37 ♕xe8 ♕a1 delivers the mate.

Afterwards, Geller tried to offer my opponent some sympathy. I overheard a dismayed Kholmov telling him that I had 'seen everything!' This game was particularly sweet because it was my first win against a Russian in almost a dozen tries (since Game 52)—and my first with Black since 1962 (Korchnoi at Curaçao).

Game 60

Fischer – Stein [USSR]

Sousse IZ 1967

Ruy Lopez

When champions meet

On his ninth turn Black varies the routine sparring but the game proceeds innocuously until Fischer veers with 14 b4, intensifying the struggle. If, in the ensuing slugfest, Stein can be said to have made an error, it is the strategic one of so pressing on the queenside as to allow White to become entrenched on the opposite wing. Fischer's prosecution of the attack is crowned by a brilliant offer of a piece (29 ♗xf5) which the Soviet champion declines. Had Fischer then renewed the sacrifice, the end would have come sooner. In his detailed notes Fischer refers to this oversight, reveals some important thoughts on the Ruy, pinpoints 'the losing move' (21...♘b6) criticises a second subtle mistake of his own (26 ♘f3) and offers a possible defence for Stein (28...♗f6) which other commentators have failed to note.

It is unfortunate that this interesting and most instructive game was expunged from the official records due to Fischer's withdrawal before having completed half his playing schedule.

1 e4

I have never opened with the d-pawn—on principle.

1 ... e5

I had expected the Sicilian, with Stein's favourite 2...g6 (the Hyper-

Accelerated Dragon). I suspect that the Russians 'group-think' before crucial games to decide which openings will upset their opponents psychologically.

2 ♘f3 ♘c6

3 ♗b5 a6

Possibly Stein was braced for 4 ♗xc6, as in Game 56.

4 ♗a4

Relieving the suspense.

4 ... ♘f6

5 0-0 ♗e7

6 ♖e1 b5

7 ♗b3 d6

In the event the reader is interested in what I may have had in mind against the Marshall Attack, he is referred to my game against Spassky at the Piatagorsky Cup, 1966, which continued: 7...0-0 8 c3 d5 9 exd5 ♘xd5 10 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 11 ♖xe5 c6 12 g3!? ♗d6 13 ♖e1 ♘f6 14 d4 ♗g4 15 ♕d3 (15 f3 might be better) 15...c5 and now 16 ♗c2! (instead of 16 dxc5?) allows Black insufficient compensation for his pawn.

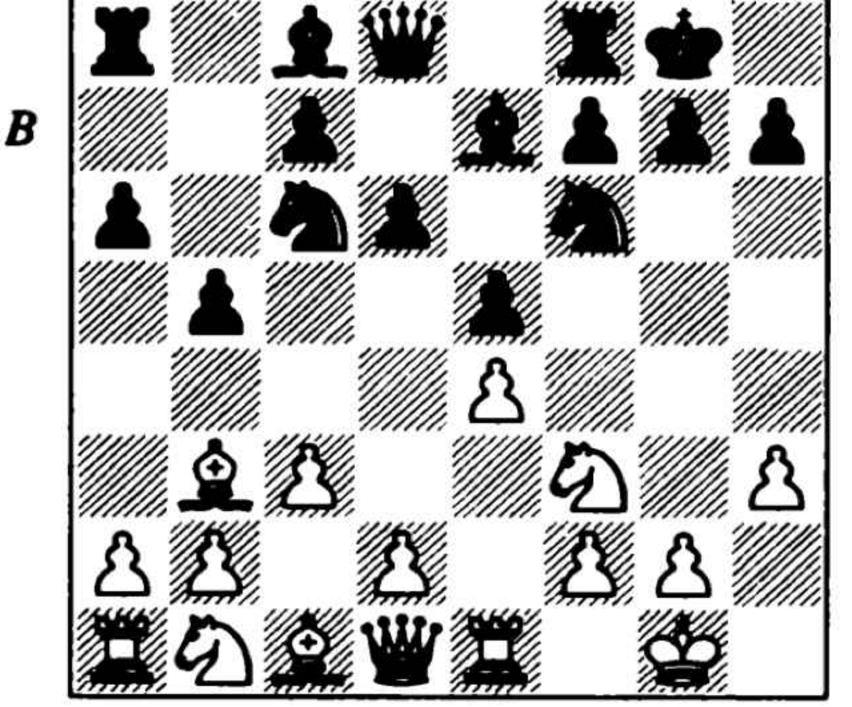
8 c3 0-0

9 h3 *(D)*

For 9 d4 see Game 36.

9 ... ♗b7

A rare side-line. 9...♘a5 10 ♗c2 c5 is a better-known sequence. The text is somewhat passive and commits the bishop perhaps prematurely. Usually Stein continues 9...♘d7 10 d4 ♗f6; then 11 a4 is slightly better



The line chosen in the game comes to resemble Breyer's Defence (9...♘b8 10 d4 ♘bd7 11 ♘bd2 ♗b7 12 ♗c2! ♖e8 13 b4 exd4 14 cxd4 a5 15 bxa5 c5)—see note to White's 17th move.

10 d4 ♘a5

Believe it or not, this knight is headed for d7! Black may prefer the shorter route with 10...♘b8 but experience has shown that after 11 dxe5 dxe5 12 ♕xd8 Black is obliged to recapture with his bishop, which interferes with his development and produces endgame difficulties.

11 ♗c2 ♘c4

Unsound is 11...exd4 12 cxd4 d5 13 e5 ♘e4 14 ♘c3 f5 15 exf6 ♗xf6 16 ♘xe4 dxe4 17 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 18 ♖xe4 c5 19 d5 and Black remains a pawn down.

Another possibility is 11...exd4 12 cxd4 c5 but White holds the edge with 12 ♘bd2. On 11...c5 immediately, White replies 12 ♘bd2 retaining the option of d5, locking in

12 b3 ♘b6

13 ♘bd2

And not 13 dxe5 dxe5 14 ♕xd8 ♖axd8 15 ♘xe5 ♘xe4! with an equal position.

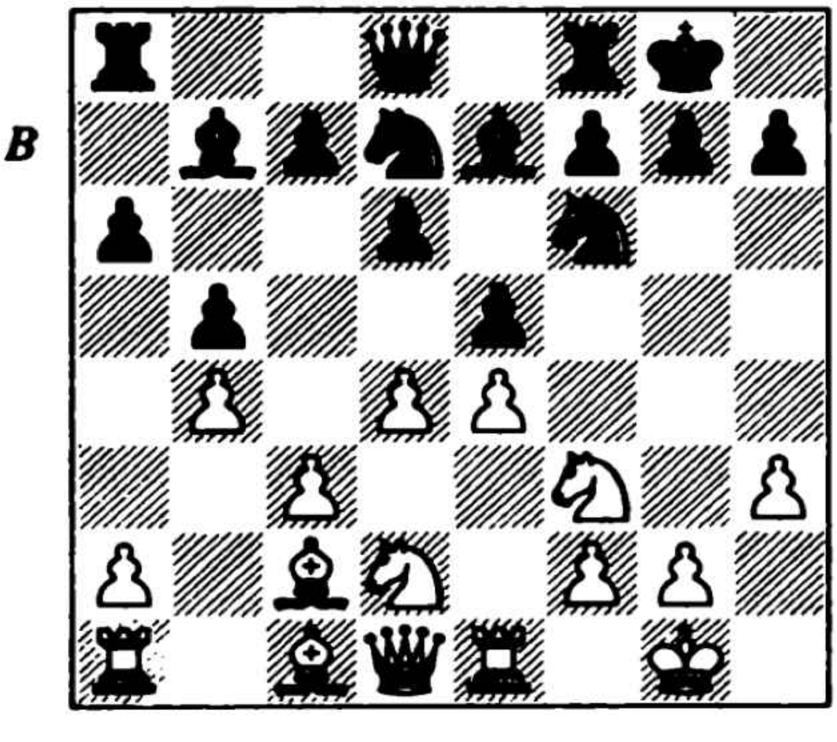
13 ... ♘bd7

Black's fifth move with this knight! 13...exd4 14 cxd4 c5 seems more active.

The game Stein-Lutikov, Moscow 1966 continued 13...♖e8? 14 ♘f1? and Black equalised easily. However, White should vary with 14 dxe5 dxe5 15 ♘xe5 ♗d6 16 ♘ef3 ♗xe4 (16...♘xe4 17 ♘xe4 ♗xe4 18 ♗g5! busts Black) 17 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 18 ♕d3! (White can't win a piece because his queen hangs at the end after ...♗h2+) with initiative.

14 b4! *(D)*

Prevents ...c5 and prepares a dominating build-up with 15 ♗b2 followed by c4. The routine continuation 14 ♗b2 (Keres-Gligorić, Zurich 1959) gives nothing.



Stein makes his bid for active counterplay even though it involves abandoning his 'strong point' (e5). If 14...a5 15 ♘b3! and Black might find himself in straitened circumstances after the knight reaches a5.

15 cxd4 a5

On 15...c5 16 bxc5 dxc5 17 d5, White's steamroller in the centre is more dangerous than Black's queenside majority.

16 bxa5 c5

Inferior would be 16...♖xa5 17 d5! c5 18 dxc6 ♗xc6 19 ♘d4 after which White, among other things, goes to work on the isolated b-pawn.

17 e5!

This identical position occurred by transposition, but with Black's rook on e8, in Čirić-Robatsch, Beverwijk 1967, which continued: 17 ♗b2 ♕xa5 18 a4 b4 19 ♘c4 ♕c7 20 e5 dxe5 21 dxe5 ♘d5 22 ♘fd2 ♘7b6 and now Spassky's recommendation of 23 e6! is unpleasant for Black. (See note to Black's 9th move.)

17 ... dxe5

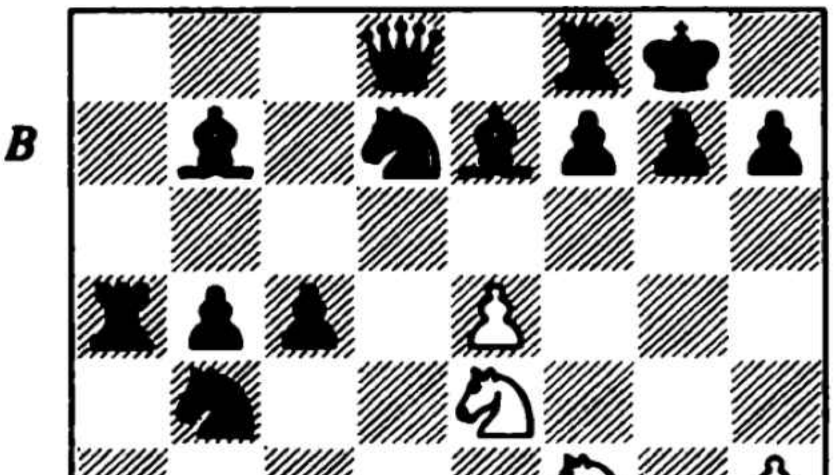
Another line of defence is 17...♘e8 with the idea of eliminating both of White's centre pawns. "The consequences are very ramified, and there is some danger that Black may fail to recover White's pawn on a5 or may lose his own on b5, or both. The text is more active but also more dangerous for Black's king." (Kmoch)

The idea is to force the bishop to retreat and thereby hem in White's queen's rook. On 19...♖xa5, 20 ♘eg5! h6 21 ♕d3! g6 22 ♘e6! wins.

20 ♗b1 ♖xa5

21 ♕e2! *(D)*

Increasing the pressure. Not 21 e6 fxe6 22 ♘eg5? (22 ♘fg5 ♗d5 23 ♘xh7 ♖f5! holds), when 22...♗xf3! 23 ♘xf3 ♗f6 wins.



One can sense the storm looming against Black's king.

21 ... ♘b6?

Quite possibly 'the losing move'. It is better to reserve this knight for the defence of the kingside. More prudent is 21...♖e8! with ...♘f8 in the offing. 22 ♖d1 ♕c7 leads to nought. Nor does 22 e6 lead to a demonstrable advantage after 22...fxe6 23 ♘eg5 ♗xg5 24 ♘xg5 ♘f8 25 ♕h5 g6, etc.

22 ♘fg5!

Now the threats are beginning to gel.

Forced, because if 22...h6, 23 ♘h7!! stands Black up. On 23...♖e8 (23...♔xh7 24 ♘xc5+ followed by ♘xb7 leads to a small fork) 24 ♘hf6+! ♗xf6 (24...gxf6 25 ♕g4+ ♔h8 26 ♘d6! ♗xd6 27 ♕f5! ♔g7 28 ♗xh6+ leads to mate) 25 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 (again if 25...gxf6, 26 ♕g4+ ♔f8 27 ♗xh6+ ♔e7 28 e6! ♔d6 29 ♕g3+ ♔c6 30 ♗e4+ ♘4d5 31 exf7 ♖h8 32 ♗xd5+ wins) 26 exf6 wins the exchange. Also insufficient is 22...g6 23 e6! f5 24 ♘f7! followed by ♗b2 with a crushing attack.

23 ♕xe4 g6

24 ♕h4 h5

25 ♕g3!

Now White threatens 26 ♘e6! ♗h4! 27 ♘xd8 ♗xg3 28 ♘b7 ♖a7 29 ♘xc5. After Black's next move, this variation would fail against 29...♗xe5.

25 g4?? ♕d4 would be too impetuous.

25 ... ♘c4!

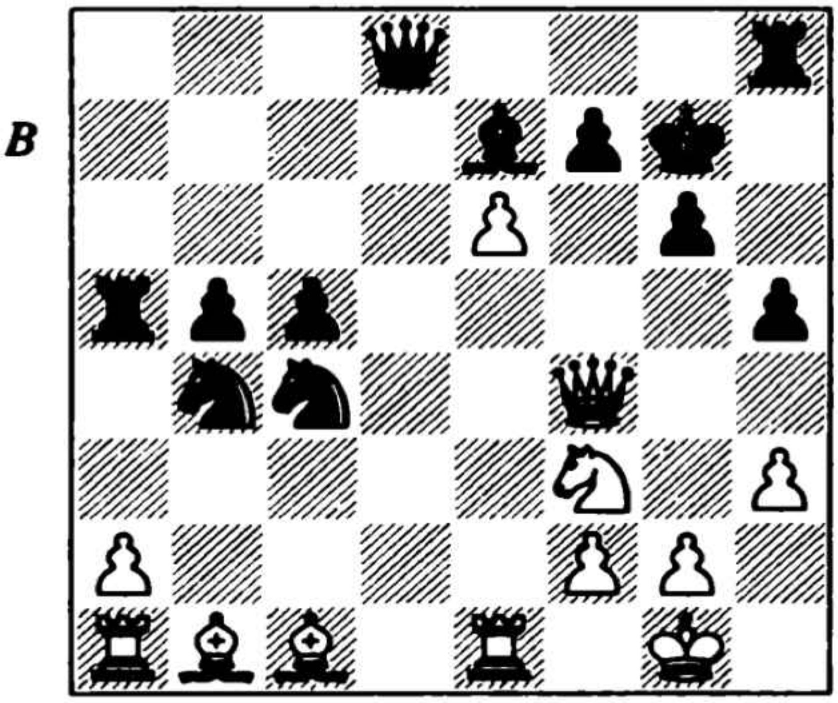
26 ♘f3?

More forcing is 26 e6! f5 27 ♘f3 (not 27 ♘f7 ♖xf7! 28 exf7+ ♔xf7 29 ♗xf5! gxf5 30 ♕f3 ♔g6 31 g4 ♕d5 and a draw appears likely) 27...♔g7 28 ♕f4 ♖h8 transposing into the game (but not 27...♖f6 since 28 ♗g5 ♔h7 29 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 30 ♗xf5! gxf5 31 ♖ad1 ♘d5 32 e7! ♗xe7 33 ♖xd5 is decisive). This order of moves would prohibit the defence mentioned in the note to

Black's 28th: after being forced to play 26...f5 Black loses his options.

At this stage the power failed. In the dark I began to worry about 26...♘d3! (if 27 ♜d1 ♘xc1! and White has nothing). Then the lights came on again and I saw clearly that 26...♘d3? was crushed by 27 ♗xd3! ♛xd3 28 ♗g5! and White penetrates decisively on the weak dark squares.

26 ... ♔g7
27 ♛f4 ♜h8
28 e6! *(D)*



"This blow rocks the remnants of the tower around the black king." (Gligorić).

28 ... f5

Much stiffer resistance (taking advantage of White's inaccurate 26th move) is offered by 28...♗f6! (not 28...f6 29 ♘h4) 29 exf7 ♗xa1 (29...♛d6? 30 f8♛+! ♔xf8 31 ♛e4 ♛d7 32 ♗g5! ♜a6 33 ♗xf6 ♜xf6 34 ♘e5! winning a pawn and eventually the game) 30 f8♛+! ♛xf8 31 ♛c7+ ♔g8 32 ♗xg6 ♘d5 (if 32...♜a6, 33 ♜e8!) 33 ♛b7 ♘f6 34 ♗f4 (threatening 35 ♘g5 and ♗f7+) 34...♜h7! White now appears to have nothing better than 35 ♗xh7+ ♘xh7 36 ♛d5+ ♛f7 (worse is 36...♔h8? 37 ♛xh5!) 37 ♛xf7+ ♔xf7 38 ♜xa1 with chances by virtue of the extra pawn. But this would be a tough ending to win!

29 ♗xf5! ♛f8 *(D)*

The only reasonable way to decline the sacrifice. On 29...♗d6, 30 e7! ♗xf4 (or 30...♗xe7 31 ♛g3 ♜a6 32 ♘g5 etc.) 31 exd8♛ ♜xd8 32 ♗xf4 gxf5 33 ♗c7! (R. Byrne).

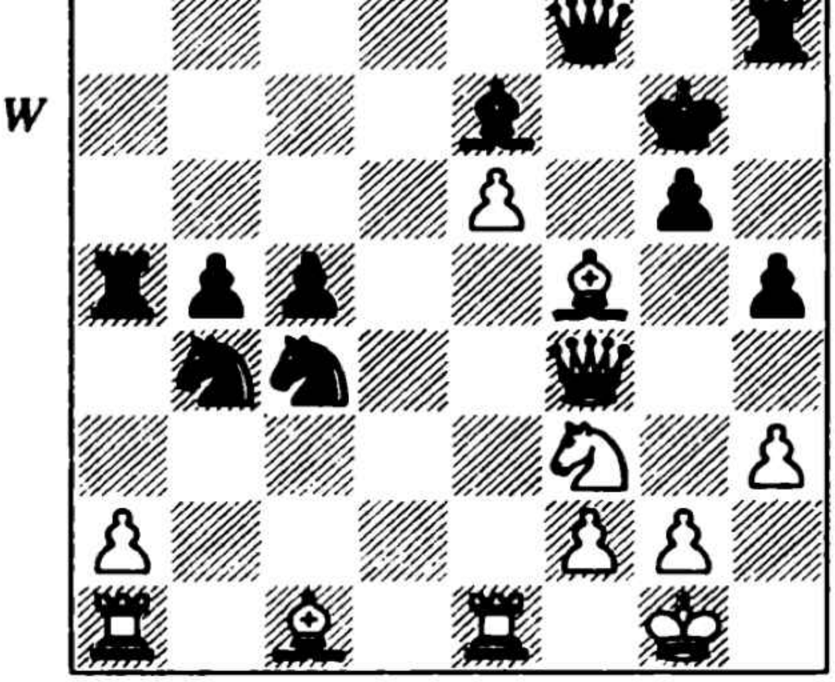
Kmoch suggests that "Leonidas might even have better taken a chance and faced the storm by playing 29...gxf5." But the bishop is taboo, for White wins quickly with 30 ♛g3+. Black now has two defences, which both fail:

a) 30...♔f8 31 ♛g6 ♛e8 (if 31...♘d6, 32 ♘e5!) 32 ♗h6+ ♜xh6 33 ♛xh6+ ♔g8 34 ♘g5.

b) 30...♔h7 31 ♘g5+! ♗xg5 32 ♗xg5 ♛d3 (if 32...♛b8, 33 ♛h4! ♔g6 34 ♗f6—or 32...♛e8 33 ♜ad1 ♜a7 34 ♜d8! ♛xd8 35 ♗xd8 ♜xd8 36 e7 ♜e8 37 ♜e6! ♜exe7 38 ♛g6+ ♔h8 39 ♛f6+ ♜g7 40 ♛h6+ and mates) 33 ♛c7+ ♔g6 34 ♛f7+! ♔xg5 35 ♛g7+ ♔f4 36 ♜ad1!, etc.

30 ♗e4?

Littlewood indicates 30 ♘h4! as a quick win for White. He's right. The main line is 30...♗xh4 31 ♛xh4 ♛xf5 (if 31...♛f6, 32 ♛g3! or



31...gxf5 32 ♕g5+ ♔h7 33 e7 ♕e8 34 ♖e6!) 32 ♕e7+ ♔g8 33 ♕d8+ ♔g7 34 ♕c7+ ♔g8 35 e7, etc.

30 ... ♕xf4
31 ♗xf4 ♖e8?

Stein's post-mortem suggestion of 31...♖a6 is met by 32 ♖ad1 ♖xe6 33 ♖d7 (threatening ♘g5), etc.

But the best try is 31...♖xa2!, when 32 ♖ad1 ♖a7 holds, and although 32 ♖xa2 ♘xa2 33 ♘e5 g5 34 ♗g3 maintains the initiative, Black has drawing chances.

Black, however, was in extreme time-pressure.

32 ♖ad1 ♖a6
33 ♖d7

Even more convincing is 33 ♗b7! ♖a7 34 ♖d7.

33 ... ♖xe6
34 ♘g5 ♖f6

Costs the exchange, but no better is 34...♖a6 35 ♗b1 ♔f6 36 ♘e4+ ♔f7 37 ♘xc5, etc.

35 ♗f3! ♖xf4

Of course 35...♔f8 is refuted by 36 ♘h7+.

36 ♘e6+ ♔f6
37 ♘xf4 ♘e5
38 ♖b7 ♗d6
39 ♔f1 ♘c2

A pretty point is revealed after 39...♘xf3 40 ♖xe8 ♘d2+ 41 ♔e2 ♗xf4 42 ♖f8+ ♔g5 43 ♖xf4 ♔xf4 44 ♔xd2 when Black must resign.

40 ♖e4 ♘d4
41 ♖b6 ♖d8
42 ♘d5+ ♔f5
43 ♘e3+

The sealed move seals Black's fate, Not only is White an exchange ahead, but his attack still rages.

43 ... ♔e6

Equally hopeless is 43...♔f6 44 ♗e2 b4 45 f4 followed by ♗c4.

44 ♗e2!

"The double threat of 45 f4 and 45 ♗xb5 clears the last stone from the road to victory." (Kmoch).

44 ... ♔d7
45 ♗xb5+ ♘xb5
46 ♖xb5 ♔c6
47 a4 ♗c7
48 ♔e2 g5
49 g3 ♖a8
50 ♖b2 ♖f8
51 f4 gxf4
52 gxf4 ♘f7
53 ♖e6+ ♘d6

If 53...♗d6, 54 ♖f6! is powerful.

54 f5 ♖a8
55 ♖d2! ♖xa4
56 f6 1-0

On 56...♖f4, 57 ♘d5 wins the house. A stubborn fight!

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USA Amateur Ch, New Jersey	1955	minu
USA Junior Ch, Nebraska	1955	10th
Greater New York City Ch	1956	5th-
Manhattan Chess Club, 'A' Reserve	1956	1st
USA Amateur Ch, New Jersey	1956	21st
USA Junior Ch, Philadelphia	1956	1st
USA Open Ch, Oklahoma	1956	4th-
Canadian Open Ch, Montreal	1956	8th-
Eastern States Ch, Washington	1956	2nd
Rosenwald Trophy, New York	1956/7	8th
Log Cabin Open Ch, New Jersey	1957	6th
Western Open Ch, Milwaukee	1957	7th
USA Junior Ch, San Francisco	1957	1st
USA Open Ch, Cleveland	1957	1st
8-game match with Cardoso, New York	1957	6-2
New Jersey Open Ch	1957	1st
North Central Ch, Milwaukee	1957	6th
USA Ch, New York	1957/8	1st
Portorož IZ	1958	5th-
Match with Matulović, Belgrade	1958	2½-
USA Ch, New York	1958/9	1st
Mar del Plata, Argentina	1959	3rd-
Santiago, Chile	1959	4th-
Zurich, Switzerland	1959	3rd-
Belgrade/Bled/Zagreb Ct	1959	5th-
USA Ch, New York	1959/60	1st
Mar del Plata, Argentina	1960	1st
Buenos Aires	1960	13th
Reykjavik, Iceland	1960	1st
Leipzig OL 1st board	1960	high (fina
USA Ch, New York	1960/1	1st
16-game match with Reshevsky, New York and Los Angeles (unfinished)	1961	5½-

USA Ch, New York	1962/3	1st
Western Open, Michigan	1963	1st
New York State Open	1963	1st
USA Ch, New York	1963/4	1st
Capablanca Memorial, Havana	1965	2nd-4th
USA Ch, New York	1965/6	1st
Piatagorsky Cup, Los Angeles	1966	2nd
Havana OL	1966	2nd
1st board		high score
USA Ch, New York	1966/7	1st
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